

THE
LIFE
OF
MISS CATALANE;
OR,

The Ill Effects of a Hasty Marriage.

IN A SERIES OF LETTERS.

Being a complete Narrative of real Characters.

TO WHICH IS ADDED,

An ESSAY on FALSE FRIENDSHIP;

OR

SATAN's EYE TOOTH.

LONDON:
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P R E F A C E.

AS every work of this kind must expect to meet with some censure, the Author begs leave to inform the public, that she would never have chosen this subject, had it not been rather to vindicate an injured character than to set forth her own genius. As such, she hopes those lovers of criticism, who set up for great wits, will look over this work with an eye of pity rather than contempt. for though the Essay on False Friendship may be thought too severe, whoever reads it with attention will find they have as little right to place confidence in every person whose character stands unimpeached in the eyes of the world, as they have to believe all the false reports which are daily invented to the prejudice

of those who are in general more innocent than their accusers : and contemptible as this work may appear, there are some passages in it which the meanest comprehensions may turn to their advantage ; particularly those who are born in affluence, and by any unforeseen misfortunes want the assistance of friends, then a new scene will be opened to their view, and at once shew them what a phantom all the boasted friendship of this world is ; as will appear by some of the Characters which are introduced in this book.

Few people know the world till misfortune or misconduct shew it as it really is ; therefore no wonder to see people of fortune appear to have many friends ; and we are all willing to believe so till we stand in need of them. But then, in Shakespeare's words, *Friendship may be likened to “The baseless fabric of a vision, which leaves not a wreck behind.”*

INTRODUCTION.

MISS Catlane was the daughter of a gentleman in the county of Suffolk, about sixty miles from the capital: a man of family and fortune; but being very imprudent in the younger part of his life, had squandered away great part of his estate; and dying at the age of forty, left a wife and two daughters possessed of little more than two hundred pounds a year, and dying without a will, threw every thing into confusion. Mrs. Catlane being of an unhappy disposition, reflected so much upon her daughters, as rendered their lives quite miserable; which induced Miss Catlane to go and board at some distance from her mother, rather than continually hear complaints which

there

there was no remedy for, and communicated such intentions to a friend, who acquiesced in the proposal, and provided her with a situation for that purpose near Framlingham, in Suffolk, with a lady whom she afterwards found to be a relation; and who grew so extremely fond of her that it was with great difficulty she could be prevailed upon by Mrs. Catlane to come home, to settle some business which her mother could not have done without her; and enticed her with a promise that she should return in a few weeks.

Miss Catlane was then about seventeen; small in person, but graceful and genteel; a fine complexion, light brown hair, and an agreeable sett of features: and though not to be ranked with the first class of beauties, was blessed with that ease and elegance which surpass beauty itself. This, joined to an uncommon flow of spirits and a fund of generosity which she inherited from her father without

without half his fortune, soon made her admired and esteemed by all: But poor Mrs. Catlane thought her generosity no ways becoming a small fortune; therefore it created a misunderstanding between them, which involved Miss Catlane in many difficulties, as will be seen in this work.



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MEMOIRS OF MISS CATLANE.

LETTER I.

MISS CATLANE TO MISS SUKEY.

B— Hall.

YOU are impatient, I dare say, to know how I like my new situation : but I can give you no better description than this, by comparing myself to a ship in a storm, just ready to sink, when Divine Providence with his Almighty aid, pointed out a most safe and peaceful harbour, where may I long continue ! But I shall now proceed to tell you how I like this place and family. The former is an agreeable village, with several genteel families in it, which makes it a pleasant neighbourhood ; and what adds to my happiness is, Mr. A—— keeps a pack of hounds, and I am to have a most delightful horse to ride upon, as I mean to go a hunting next week. Then for a lucky fall to waft me into another world. Mrs. A—— says she thinks I shall break my neck ; for I am a careless thing. She is a very pleasing woman, about fifty ; of a lively disposition, a sweet temper, and something very engaging in her manner. You will think so, when I tell you Mr. A—— is her second husband ; a very handsome man, about twenty-five but consumptive, of course never well. So, my dear, she is a good nurse for him ; though I believe they are a very happy couple,

B

ple, for he seems as fond of her as if she was more agreeable to him in years. They take a great deal of pleasure; always out or have company at home; and are great card players here, which you know is not disagreeable to me; and as they visit nowhere but in genteel families, I shall find it a very improving place for a young person; and I assure you they are very religious people, though they join in such a round of innocent diversions, but without that sordid strictness which renders religion so disgusting to young people, and serves but to contract their ideas into an outward show of it, without ever tasting its inward purity. Such are my notions of things; and little as I know of the world, have seen too many wear it as a cloak for all manner of vice; and indeed shall always believe we have most reason to suspect those who profess a great deal, let it be in what it will; for my dear mother, you know, says that she loves us better than other people do their children, yet I am sure she has a strange way of shewing it. I hope things are altered now I am from home, and that you are more happy, as she has no one to speak to but yourself and has often wished she had but one of us; therefore I sincerely wish you may experience the good effect of my leaving you, and wish to know how you spend your time. I often think I see you sit up stairs at work, and hear my mother scolding at the bottom, and calling you down by the appellation of a worker of mischief. Had you an agreeable jaunt from Saxmundham? did you meet with any thing worth observation, after you parted from me? Do inform me if you have seen my old spark Clod, and if he has learned to talk yet; for you may tell him I do not admire a being who has nothing to say, and would advise him to make love to a lady who is deaf and dumb, as he certainly must court by signs. And as I am fonder of the substance than the shadow, he does

not

not suit me; therefore shall give him up to some happy rustick, who is more calculated for his taste than I am. Poor young man; what pity it was his father did not give him a polite education, which would have shook off most part of the clown which now hangs so heavy upon his shoulders, that I fear it will break his neck, and think it is an inexcusable neglect in a man of fortune to bring his children up in such ignorance of the world. 'Tis true the young man can write and read and cast accompts: but what then? the writing only serves him to transact business according to his employ; the reading, to blunder over a few chapters in the bible to please his mother on the Sunday; and his casting accompts to give a receipt for a heard of swine. These are all the improvements the young gentleman has made after seven years at school in the country. Oh heavens! keep me from such a husband and give me one who knows better than myself, that I may with pleasure be instructed by him; which is the sincere wish of your affectionate sister,

S. CATLANE.

LETTER II.

MISS CATLANE TO MR. MILDMAN.

A GREEABLE to my promise, I wish to inform you, that I am safe arrived from the House of Bondage into the Land of Promise—a delightful place, an agreeable family, and every thing I could wish; and to crown my desires, the gentleman keeps a pack of hounds, and I am to go hunting to-morrow morning. Sir J— B— spent yesterday evening with us, and provided me with a horse of his to ride on; therefore I have devoted this night to write to you—for if I go to bed I shall

not sleep for thinking of it. You find I have almost forgot all my troubles : indeed I make it a rule never to think of them when I can possibly divert myself from it. I had a very agreeable jaunt to B—, attended by my sister and Mrs. Friendly, as far as Saxmundham. Nothing particular happened. B— will be quite stupid now I am come away ; for I was the life of the place, and I assure you the trades people looked blue when they heard I was going to leave them. What will poor Wright do with his post chaises now ? he will want but one—and as to the drivers, they mean to go into mourning for the half crowns they are likely to lose by my flight—and the poor in general are in the greatest lamentation at my departure ; for they were pleased to tell me they wished to have seen me spend my days in my native place, where so many of my family had lived, and been shining ornaments of benevolence and charity, particularly my grandfather, who reduced four thousand a year to four hundred—and my father went on in the same way—and my poor neighbours are afraid my leaving them may be a means of setting me in the right road, which will be an irreparable loss to them. For my part, I am so happy in my new situation, that I am quite elevated : for I partake of a round of pleasure with that ease and tranquillity which makes every thing so agreeable. Mrs. A— is one of the best bred women I ever saw. There is a sweetness in her disposition that is beyond description. May I never leave this state of happiness, 'till I am translated to everlasting bliss. I know you will think me to blame for leaving my mother ; and suppose I ought to put up with her temper as a duty incumbent on a child. I grant *that*, where the child's ruin and destruction do not depend upon it : but where this is the consequence, all other motives ought to give place. Indeed it is by my mother's consent that I

am

am come to B— Hall ; otherwise I could not have done so ; therefore it is not so desperate a scheme, nor so bad as it might have happened, had I been obliged to stay at B— Hall any longer : for I have too great a pleasure in pleasing, to be happy in a place where I find that is out of my power. You may suppose that it was my thoughtless disposition which occasioned Mrs. Catlane's unhappiness, but indeed it was not ; and as you seem a stranger to the real cause, I must beg leave to keep you so, and bear the blame myself, rather than expose so dear a friend. I can be serious, you see, when I am in the mind ; and if it was not that I am going a hunting to-morrow morning, I would set about making the copy of verses which I promised you some time ago. But I know, that unless they are solemn they will not suit your serious disposition—therefore till I am in a suitable mind, I cannot think to set about them—however if I do not break my neck to-morrow, you shall have them soon—if I do, shall expect you will write something suitable for me on that occasion, which will much oblige

Your very humble servant,

S. CATLANE.

LETTER III.

MISS CATLANE TO MRS. FRIENDLY.

SOON after I parted from you, I arrived at B— Hall, and was most agreeably received by Mr. and Mrs. A— who were sorry my sister and you did not accompany me all the way. Indeed you would have been highly pleased with Mrs. A— for

She is a delightful woman ; and though near fifty, is as lively as a girl. And well she may ; for she has a young husband about twenty-five—therefore I think love must be all in imagination ; for they seem as fond of each other as if they were quite equal in respect to years—what a change in my situation, from a scene of unhappiness, quarrelling, and discontent, now arrived at a state of happiness, regularity and enjoyment. And, dear madam, could I but live here 'till I come of age, that I might settle some family affairs to my mind, and take my poor sister from P— Hall, I should have my happiness complete, for I should look upon this as my home. For Mrs. A— tells me as she has no children of her own, she shall call me her child, and treat me the same. But four years is a great while to look forward, and a thousand things may happen to tear me from this pleasing spot ; my mother may insist upon my coming to P— Hall again, and then I am ruined for ever ; but will hope for the best, and dear madam, do you use all the influence you have, to persuade her to let me stay, if you should hear her wish for me home again, as I make no doubt but she will soon.

My poor sister, I pity her from my heart, as I fear she will be very unhappy without me ; but I resign her to your kind protection, you who have so often taken us both in, when we have come with our little trembling hands and weeping eyes, frightened as it was from house and home, and looking up to Heaven for a friend where we might "our out our little souls, and be defended from those violent storms of passion in which we were often surrounded : these are obligations which I can never forget, nor shall I ever be wanting in gratitude to acknowledge the many favours of this sort I have received from your hands ; and as you are a favorite of my poor mother's, you dare say more to her than any other in respect to us ; you shall

be called the peace maker, and my dear sister and I
be bound to pray for you as long as we live.

Did you go to Mr. R—'s ball? for my own part I find myself so happy here that I did not wish to be at it, and then the life I should have had for going, would have been paying at too dear a rate for an evening's diversion, and I shall be at one of our own if I live 'till Christmas, for Mr. A— gives one then, and we shall go to Sir John R—'s and Sir John B—'s, and Mr. A— subscribes to Saxmundham and Yoxford assemblies. That is just the thing for me, I am elevated at the thoughts of it. Dear madam do not tell my mother that I am in so gay a place, for I am sure she would not let me stay if she knew it. I find Mrs. A— was a rich widow to Mr. A—, and that she married him against her friends consent. But he is a handsome man, and had two thousand pounds of his own, so he was not in distress; he is a good young man, I think he is quite deserving her, though she has a thousand good qualities notwithstanding her age: and upon my word I think any man might be happy with her. Mr. A— is quite the gentleman, though her friends will not allow that, because his pedigree did not derive from Baronets; but he has too much good sense to reflect upon her for the ill treatment he has received from her friends, and looks upon it with the contempt it deserves. She told me Sir John R— or his family did not visit her for some time on that account, but now they do, as Lady R— is a relation. Indeed Mrs. A— prides herself more in being happy than in being great; for she has been so exceedingly lucky in her choice of two husbands, that she will not give up her judgement in that point, to the first family in the kingdom: and she knows too much of the world to sacrifice her peace of mind to the criticisms of the curious. She has a sister married to a

Doctor

Doctor S—, a man according to her father's own heart, of a good family, rich as a nabob, and as proud as Lucifer ; such was the man he chose for his eldest daughter, for I find he had but few good qualities to recommend him, without it was his uncommon share of prudence, which makes him keep his wife without a shilling in her pocket for fear she should spend it, for Mrs. A— says she never has any money. This is the true character of many who are called good husbands ; but should such a one fall to my lot, I shall be very miserable, and I will take care he shall not be very happy ; but I think if he was not quite a fool, I could make him ashamed of such conduct. But oh Heavens ! keep me from such gentlemen-like husbands, and let them be begging for wives with their pedigrees about their necks, with this motto, " No power for those who know not how to use it." Dear madam excuse my quoting this subject, and the remarks I have made upon it I hope will meet with your approbation, which will confer an honour upon your ever affectionate friend,

S. CATLANE.

LETTER IV.

MISS S. CATLANE TO MISS CATLANE.

WITH pleasure I received your letter ; and am happy to find you express so much satisfaction in your new situation. And am glad to hear Mrs. A— is so agreeable a woman ; and as she is not likely to have any children of her own, you will be an excellent companion, and I dare say, when she comes to be thoroughly acquainted with your disposition, she will be unhappy to part with you. My mother is glad you like B— Hall so well ; and tells

tells me she hopes you will be tamed before you come home : that is her expression.

I find myself very dull without you : if it was not for Mrs. Friendly, I should be quite stupid ; for you know, we never had any acquaintance in this place ; for though the village consists of several wealthy farmers, yet my father was a man of too much pride to let us be sociable with them, therefore I see nobody but our tenants, and the poor people who will always lament the loss of their greatest benefactor ; and my mother says she shall not give away any thing at Christmas to the poor, but bread ; for she has no notion of hurting herself, for the sake of a good word, and be imposed upon as my father was. Indeed I must think my dear father was very imprudent, and that makes my mother so unhappy with us ; for she is as discontented with me as she was with you, though she thinks I am more of her own disposition ; and indeed she tells me I shall learn to do the work of the house ; for she will have no servant, now *the fine lady is gone*. So, suppose I shall be shut up to clean the boilers, kettles and sauce-pans, till I am as black as a tinker ; and old Saverall tells her that is right, to bring us up to work. He did not know I heard him—I wish you had been here ; you would soon have silenced his busy tongue—he told me he thought it was pity you and Madam Catlane could not agree, for it was an additional expence that might have been avoided, and for his part he should have disregarded a little scolding. I told him I wished he had it from morning till night as I had ; but you know his simple way of argueing.—“Never mind it Miss Sukey, never mind it girl, Madam Catlane means no harm.” I am glad to hear you have a horse you can ride when you please ; but should prefer the chariot. As to your hunting I do not approve of it ; you seem to make as light of a broken neck as you would

would to dance a minuet; and at one time or other you may suffer for it, therefore I really wish you would decline it. I have not seen young Clod since you left us, so have had no opportunity to communicate your sentiments to him; nor do I think it would have been proper if I had, for believe me the young man is unhappy enough at the ridicule he meets with from his friends, without your laughing at him, for his mother always told him, you made game of him, yet the infatuated youth could not or would not see it. But you must mind, for he says it will come home to you one day; for much as you think of yourself you may find at last a worse husband than he would have made. You find if he is deprived of the gift of talking he yet retains the art of thinking; though he had better not then have thought of making love to you. Do you know what he fell in love with you for? as you say he cannot speak, I suppose he never told you. But it was with your hand and arm; for he told his brother that he never saw any one so handsome in his life. As to your face, he thinks nothing of that, for you are too pale for him, besides your cheeks do not project out enough, neither have they got brick dust enough in the composition. He would like them better if they were more like their dairy maid Betty's. As to your person, that is little, and so it may be pretty; but he thinks if there was more of it, it would be as well. Now I think there is more than enough for him already. As to your wit, he says you think you have a great deal; but that is not saying he thinks so. But he wishes to buy wit, as he does horses; not to have more than is useful. I find his father and mother will never forgive you, as they think you gave him encouragement on purpose to deceive him, and that he is not like the same person he was before he became acquainted with you; for I suppose if they

bid

bid him go to plow, he goes to cart ; and if they bid him go to cart, he goes to plow. And they think he is mad ; but I am sure they are, or they would have given the young man a better education and not have permitted a person of his fortune to be the dupe of ridicule, for which his friends are more to blame than he is ; but their opinion of things are, that if you learn young people to work, they can leave it at any time ; but they do not consider that this old proverb is out of date ; therefore no recommendation for a young man to go a courting ; it is not what he can do for a living, but what he can say to flatter his mistress, seems to have a much better effect, and I would advise Clod to read Ovid's art of love, and make no doubt but he will soon find himself a more agreeable companion for the ladies, and shun the great disgrace which he now seems to lay under, in having nothing to say.

'Tis well my mother does not see this letter ; for she thinks you will never do so well in point of fortune as if you had consented to have had Mr. Clod. But who would have a creature that was no more minded in the family then the great house dog, nor so much.—However you may have him at any time ; for he says he will never marry without he can have you. This is all I can learn at present ; and am, my dear sister,

Your's affectionately,

SUKEY CATLANE.

LETTER

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Your's affectionately,

SUKEY CATLANE.

L E T T E R

LETTER V.

YOUNG MILDMAN TO MISS CATLANE.

THE honour and pleasure I received from your favour are equal ; and I congratulate you on your happy arrival into the promised land. But you must remember one thing, that is, not to worship any idols, in particular the golden calf ; if you do, you may not only be driven out of the pleasant land, but be utterly forsaken by those who have now the highest veneration for you ; and happiness is of so short a duration in this world, that I could wish you not to be so elevated at the flattering ideas of it, for ten thousand things may break in upon you, and destroy your greatest expectations ; but this you will say is nothing more than the natural propensity of every melancholy and stupid imagination, that can neither enjoy life myself, nor wish any body else. Indeed you are mistaken, for though I am not blest with such exalted ideas of felicity in this world, as your insurmountable gaiety of mind has carried you to, yet think I am better suited to rub through a troublesome world than your ladyship. For in the first place, I am already prepared to meet disappointments, because I expect them ; in the next place, I put no more dependance on Dame Fortune than my prudence suggests ; therefore in my own opinion I am almost a philosopher, and so well provided against any thing that Providence has allotted for me that I think whatever state I am in, I have learned therewith to be content. I do not mean this as any reflection upon your leaving P— Hall ; for if I know the real cause, tho' you tell me I do not, I might think it a very requisite expedient, but confess I wish you not so far off ; and Providence may bring us nearer one day

day or other. I expect to hear Mr. Clod has committed suicide, but what would be the consequence of that dreadful catastrophe? for I think you are possessed of such elegant and refined feelings, that it would be impossible for you to survive it long. Without joke, he is very unhappy. I pity him for one thing and condemn him for another; his falling in love I do not wonder at; but the object of his choice was so much above what he or I could ever expect to obtain, that he ought to have checked his passion without exposing himself by confessing it. I cannot forbear laughing when I think if such a thing had been, what unity there would have been in your persons, and what harmony in your dispositions—poor Clod following the plough, you, dancing at an Assembly; he, loading the sacks of corn; you playing cards with Lady Martin and driving home in old Clod's carriage, while the young one is sent out to clean the horses. I told him this; he said he did not mind that, to please his fancy. I think the end of it would have been a very pretty fancy, though upon my word I do not believe you have it in your nature to treat such an humble slave as this with contempt, yet as you would find it impossible to polish him, I really think you would be ashamed of him, though you may not despise him; for the man that does every thing in his power to please his wife, merits from her every attention, with that softness and delicacy, so pleasing and so valuable in your sex, and so great a recommendation to a woman of sense.

I hope you will excuse the freedom I have taken in communicating my sentiments upon the subject. Pray let me have those verses you promised, and I will obey your orders in composing some for you; but I hope they will not be on the dismal occasion of a broken neck, or sudden death; for however amiable you may appear to me in body and mind, I can hardly believe you are altogether fit to die at

present. But summoning up all your good qualities, and setting aside the unhappiness you have occasioned young Clod, I believe, and ever shall, that you are of that intrinsic value, that few of our sex are deserving such a prize. These are the real sentiments of him, who has the honor to be,

Madam, your most obliged humble servant,

JOHN MILDMAN.

LETTER VI.

MRS. FRIENDLY TO MISS CATLANE.

I Am now set down to acknowledge the receipt of your kind favor, and indeed it gave me great pleasure to hear you are likely to be so happy. Miss Sukey and I had a very agreeable jaunt from Saxmundham to Ipswich, where we dined, and then set out for P— Hall, where we arrived about five o'clock; but found Mrs. Catlane not very happy, though she seemed glad to see us, and was more composed before I left her. I went to Mr. R—'s ball, and was highly entertained. The company was the same that attended last year, and that divine dancer, Mrs. Garrick, who was the delight of the audience, was there; for if possible, she dances by inspiration. We had eighty dishes served up in plate for supper, but as you was there last year, I shall not trouble you with a description of them; I shall only add, that according to custom the country girls were more dressed than the ladies; and as to their heads, the ladies were very moderate, whilst ours were immoderate and preposterous; and I find Miss C— had her hair dress so very high that

that she was obliged to sit double in the carriage ; so much that she has had a stiff neck ever since, and Doctor R— thinks she always will, for there are no signs of her ever getting the better of it. Mr. R— danced with all the ladies, and behaved in that gentlemanlike manner he always does on the occasion, and they are too polite to laugh at us rusticks, till we are out of their sight. I saw Lady B— clap Mr. R— upon the shoulder, and heard her say, “ egad Dick, you have got some of the “ finest girls in the kingdom here ; no wonder Essex “ is such a pleasing spot to you, your farms are “ good, sure, for they seem to produce a plentiful “ crop.” You know that is like her fallies of wit, and as it was her Ladyship said it, no body will doubt but that it was genuine. I must beg the favour of seeing some of your poetry, which will much oblige

E. FRIENDLY.

LETTER VII.

MISS CATLANE TO MISS SUKEY CATLANE.

AS I know I must write something to enliven you in that stupid place, I shall make it a point to collect together all the nonsense I can to make you laugh, as I dare say you have not bent the muscles of your face into a smile since I left you ; therefore it now grows time you should begin to use them, for fear they get quite contracted. And indeed, had you seen me yesterday hung up by my heels, you would have laughed ; for I had a fall from my horse as I was hunting, and if my buckle had not broke, I suppose I should have been torn to pieces ; however I had the duce

of a fall, yet by chance received no hurt, nor did any body see me fall but Mr. A—, who always rides after me, and he was at too great a distance to know how I fell. Sir John B— was but just before me, and was the first who came to my assistance; but before I could get up, had forty people round me. Sir John B— insisted I should be led to the first farm house and put to bed, and stay till next day; when he would send his carriage to conduct me to B— Hall. I thanked him for his politeness, but told him I had received no hurt from the fall, or the fright, therefore chose to pursue the sports of the field for that day. Sir John said, on no other terms than for him to lead my horse as far as I chose to ride. He set me up again, and off I went; indeed it was as much as he could do to keep pace with me without leading my horse, and we rode above thirty miles; and he declared I went over such dangerous places as he would not, if it had not been out of a compliment to me. This is the man of breeding who would sacrifice his neck out of pure complaisance. Indeed there is something very pleasing in such refined manners, and then he paid me so many fine compliments; oh! such things he said, as I never heard before. However, after riding forty miles, and being at the death of three hares, I returned to B— Hall, attended by Sir John B—, Doctor S—, and Mr. A—. My dear sister, I am the happiest girl alive. I correspond with young Mildman; he is a good young man, and I love to tease him by writing letters to insinuate that I have a very mean opinion of his understanding, and am pleased to find fault and contradict all he says or does; and I do not wish him to believe that I am in jest. I suppose Mrs. F— has told you the contents of my letter to her,

And am, your's affectionately,

S. CATLANE.

LETTER

LETTER VIII.

MISS CATLANE, TO YOUNG MILDMAN.

FROM this day forward I mean to give you the title of the sage Philosopher ; for upon my word and honor you write with as much learning and eloquence as a methodist parson, and a great deal in that stile ; for was I not sure you was under the care of Counsellor H—, I should have supposed you had been practising cant phrases under old Shamgrace the Whitfieldite ; and am at a loss to answer your philosophical discourse. But I shall begin with the golden calf—you bid me remember to worship no idols ; in answer to that Sir, 'tis not likely that any one will do that, who wishes to be idolized themselves. Again, you bid me in particular not to worship the golden calf ; if I did, I should not only be drove out of this pleasant land, but should for ever lose the esteem of those who had now the highest veneration for me. This is an ambiguous sentence ; however Mr. Wifearc, I cannot comply with your request, for believe me if I worship any, it shall be a golden one, and not one from Essex. I think it is a golden one that can only keep us in a pleasant land long, and hinder us from being utterly forsaken. Such is my presumptive ignorance, set up against your incomparable judgement of things.—You could wish me not to be so elevated at the flattering hopes of happiness in this world, since every thing in life is uncertain : upon my word if I observe your uncooth precepts I shall soon sink into nothing ; but I cannot fall in with your sentiments ; for hope gives life to the soul, and however flattering it may prove to the imagination, we should soon sink below the brute creation without it, and could never

expect to arrive at the moral perfection you profess to enjoy. I think Sir, you seem to me to be in a state where you have nothing to wish for ; if so, you must be of all beings the most miserable ; for may I exist no longer than I have hopes, though at the greatest distance, which I could wish to accomplish.—Now for your laudable scheme for rubbing through a troublesome world :—a young man at the age of twenty, brought up by his fond parents in the most tender manner, his mind enlarged, or at least, ought to be, by a superior education, heir to an estate of three hundred per annum, at the age of twenty-one, joined to a genteel profession, an entire stranger to every disappointment in life, yet talk of rubbing through a troublesome world, and wish to fully over the most pleasing prospects with the most dreadful apprehensions of what may never happen ; there is but little philosophy in this I think. Now I am but seventeen, and have been inured to troubles and contradictions ever since I was born, and before, as far as I know, yet have more spirit, and I dare say as much fortitude, as you with all your philosophy ; besides if they are such inanimated beings as you make them out, I do not wish to have anything to do with them.

I am glad to hear you have such an unlimited share of prudence as to set dame Fortune at defiance ; for I have read Plato, and other authors on that subject, but find you very far surpass their understanding on that head, therefore no doubt but whatever state you are in, you have learned therewith to be content, and I trust chance will do as much for me. Do you think to flatter my vanity when you tell me young Clod is unhappy on my account ; because I must have a good opinion of myself, and a higher of him than I ever had yet, before I could believe it ; but if he really is so, tell him to go and sit down by his father's kitchen fire,

fire, and ask the servants to tell him a long story about hobgoblins to divert his melancholy ; if that will not cure him, they must frighten him, by telling him the house is haunted, and that he is bewitched. This and the like, will soon put all notions of love out of his head.

As to your high flight of fancy in thinking what a unanimous couple Clod and I should make, it is a very just observation ; yet I think I should like such a subinifive being ; if he would do as I bid him, I could desire no more ; and as to his working hard, he might find that very requisite to maintain such a giddy wife as you are pleased to think I should make. As to despising a man for loving me, indeed I should if he did so more than I thought I deserved. You have given me a lively description of a well bred man ; in particular where you tell me, that after all his arguments he must submit the point to be determined by my judgment, whether right or wrong. I admire this part ; but yet fear I might think he had more good breeding than good sense ; if so, it would be straining a point too far. And then the delicacy with which he is to enforce every thing to my understanding is so engaging, and his manner so bewitching, that I find myself half in love with this gentlemanlike character.

And do you really think there is such a man ? Why dearly as I love hunting, I think I could give it up for such a pleasing object. But then you tell me there are so many things wanting to compleat the married state, that I shall always be afraid to venture. For my part, I thought good nature and a great deal of money, were all we had to wish for in that state. And after you had lifted me up with this beatific vision, you cast me down again, by telling me there is another kind of creature, which is so much incumbered with moroseness and ill-nature, that they cannot be kind, even to those
they

they profess to love. Pray what kind of species is this? to me it seems a monster. But if fate has ordained one of those hyæna's for me, I will not make myself unhappy about it; for if I am unfortunate enough to be chained to one of those savages, by the laws of my country, the law of nature shall set me free; if not I will treat him with the contempt he deserves, and not look upon him as an object sufficient to destroy my happiness; nor is there any thing on earth that shall make me miserable, not even that tremendous ghastly thing called Poverty, with all her direful attendants. Therefore I think I am as fit to rub through a troublesome world as Mr. Allwise. Pray inform me what you mean by the word cruelty, which you mentioned in respect to hunting. Now, Sir, after summing up all my imperfections, and being ready for hunting to-morrow morning, I have the pleasure to be

Your most obedient humble servant,

S. CATLANE.

LETTER IX.

MISS CATLANE, TO MRS. FRIENDLY.

YESTERDAY I had the honour to dine at Yoxford Place, the seat of Sir John B—. There was a great deal of company, and I never spent a more agreeable day. After dinner, we formed ourselves into card parties, which made three tables. I played three rubbers at whist; and my partner was the charming knight;—the title seems to found very pleasing in my ears.

I am

I am charmed and delighted with Lady Smith.—I find she visits Mrs. A—, and is to come to B—Hall next week. She is an elegant woman, about thirty—fine spirits ; and a great deal of ready wit, which she uses on every occasion ; so that no other person can shine much in that talent, in any company where her ladyship is of the party ;—but as cards take away the edge of wit in all conversation, there was nothing said worth repeating.

You wish me, my dear Madam, to send you some of my poetry ; as such I am happy to find an opportunity to dedicate a few lines to my best of friends ; and can never be at a loss for a subject, when I write to you.

Addressed to Mrs. Friendly.

My grateful heart shall ne'er forget to praise,
The well-tim'd friendship of my younger days :
But more I owe to you, than words express,
Who took me in, and pity'd my distress.
May you ne'er want the comfort you have giv'n :
But be rewarded with the gifts of heav'n :
You sooth'd my heart, which was so much oppress'd ;
Wip'd off the tear, and lull'd my soul to rest.
Long may you live, with ev'ry blessing stor'd ;
By fortune favour'd, and by heaven ador'd :
Then may we meet in yonder blissful skies,
Where love and friendship everlasting lies.

These poor lines, my dear Madam, I humbly submit to your inspection :—I should have wrote more ; but indeed they fall so short of what I owe to your unbounded goodness, that I found myself unable to proceed ; and the little opportunity I have had to improve myself in this way, and the great disadvantages under which I labour, from an education, no ways calculated for poetical amusements :—therefore I hope your generosity will cast

cast an eye of simplicity on them equal to the stile in which I have wrote them ; but be assured they are the natural effusions of an unaffected heart. I am, my dear Mrs. Friendly,

Your's for ever.

S. CATLANE.

LETTER X.

YOUNG MILDMAN TO MISS CATLANE.

HAPPY are those who are persecuted for righteousness sake ; therefore I have called forth all my fortitude ; and am determined to stand the test of all the ridicule and raillery, that your eloquence of wit or invention can possibly suggest ; and without the assistance of old Shamgrace, the Whitfieldite parson, I mean to ask you (since I find you believe in neither Providence or Fate), what your religious principles are ; for as every people and nation do admit of some, I should suppose you are not without any.

In respect to philosophical reasoning, you seem to be so complete a match for me, that I wish you to pursue your arguments, and if I admire your idea of a future state, as I do your wit, I shall be likely to benefit very much by your correspondence, which I shall ever esteem as the happiest part of my life.

I laughed so heartily at your letter, that Counsellor K—— thinking there was somebody with me, came into the room to see who it was, and finding me alone, said, " Jack, are you mad, or is the

" D—

" D— in you? what are you laughing at?" The letter being in my hand, I shewed it him, and on reading it, his fat sides shook with laughing. He asked who it was, and where you lived, and much more; concluding with saying " egad, Jack, she " will be more than a match for you if you do not " mind ;—you must bear her down with *law*, if " you cannot overcome her with *gospel*."

I find I shall always go by the name of "*the Philosopher*," while I stay in Ipswich, for Miss K—— has got it, and half the town.

You tell me I seem to live in a state, where I have nothing to wish for? Indeed, however insensible you may take me to be, I am not become that inanimate piece of clay, at present; nor shall I while you keep up the little life I have remaining, by writing to me; indeed it is the only thing that will keep me from falling into nothing.

You wish me to inform you, what I mean by cruelty in the exercise of hunting:—'tis needless to tell you what you must so well know. But since you wish me to explain it to you, I must obey.

For my own part, the sports of the field give me no pleasure; and what you *bucks* call *heroic* and *noble*, I call *cowardice* and *cruelty*. Now you see what foolish conceptions I have of things. But now for an explanation. Why I think, to see forty or fifty men riding over hedges and ditches, breaking down gates and stiles, and every thing they come at, and doing all the mischief they can, and all this after a pack of dogs in pursuit of a poor simple hare, is a madness not to be described. It is not only unmanly and cruel, but a diversion more fit for savages than the refined part of mankind.—And then to add to the horrid scene; to view a delicate little woman, riding over hedge and ditch, makes me shudder. Believe me, I revere the fair sex so much, that it hurts even my uncouth feelings, when I think they do the least thing that seems

seems to reflect upon that delicacy, which is so becoming them, and what you possess in the highest degree, hunting excepted ; and till you can clear up that point, and make it appear to me a laudable amusement fit for a lady, I cannot approve of it ; therefore I wish for your defence.

I have sent you some verses, intended for your epitaph, if you should dislike this world, and leave us soon ; but that you may not, but continue a shining ornament to your sex, is the wish of him who has the honour to be

Your most obedient humble servant,

JOHN MILDMAN.

AN EPITAPH ON MISS CATLANE.

Here, in one horrid ruin, lies
 The young, the gay, the great, the wise ;
 Here lies the lass whose boundless mind,
 Scarce to a world could be confin'd :
 Here sleeps the lass, whose lively bloom
 Promis'd a term of years to come ;
 But death cut off the promised joys,
 And every hope at once destroys :
 Here lies the lass who none could save,
 Sent gay and young to this dull grave !
 So vain is all that boasted state
 Of birth and fortune in the great ;
 Since all, alike, must yield their breath.
 And Wit must yield to mightier Death.

LETTER

LETTER XI.

MRS. FRIENDLY TO MISS CATLANE.

THOUGH the object of your choice is by no means qualified for such encomiums in verse, as you are pleased to address me with ; yet, could it be so, your great sensibility of friendship, merits all that can be said or done on that head ; therefore I can only add, that I shall always think it the greatest favour that can be, to be honoured with your friendship.

I am sorry I did not before know that you was poetically inclined, as I have a relation who is a clergyman, and a great reader ; and so very fond of poetry, that he has composed several volumes which he purposes having printed.—I have often heard him say, he should be happy to know some young lady who had a turn that way ; for it would give him the greatest pleasure to instruct her in the different languages, fit for that purpose.—I could have recommended you to his care, where you would have had books, and every thing you could wish for ; and I make no doubt but you would soon have done him the highest honour.

I find you are amongst the great people ; and that cards, hunting, and a Sir John or two, will take up most part of your time, so that you will be obliged to neglect your poetry, which will be a great pity ; for any well dressed thing may sit and lose her money at cards, whose head would never reach to make a rhyme ; and many a person may make a very good figure on horseback, but yet a very poor one at a copy of verses : therefore I cannot wish you to give up your poetry on any account.

D

I shall

I shall expect to hear you have hunted up a beau or two, in your next. Your sister and I went to Little Holland last week, and staid all night at D— Hall. There was a great deal of company: we had a daisce, and were very merry with the rustics. We had no Sir Johns:—plain John Trott suits us as well. But we had a country Squire with us, and that will serve us to talk about for a twelvemonth to come; for we think as much of him as you will of a Duke, ere long, for I find a title is all that pleases you.

I am glad you received no hurt by your fall from your horse. For my part I should be frightened to death to see you ride a hunting. I was in company with a gentleman last week, who knows Miss Buxton, and has been at the death of many a fox with her. He says few men can ride with her; and that she keeps a stable of hunters, on purpose for her own use, which she tires out in the season.

Pray let us know how you spend your time, when Lady Smith comes; and give me a full account of all the great people. It will serve us, you know, to talk over in the winter evenings; and it now grows so cold we cannot get out; therefore you must furnish us with your adventures, which cannot fail to divert us.

Mrs. Catlane begins to wish for you at home again; and I am sure if she sends for you to P— Hall you will not stay, for, poor woman, she will not be happy with you nor without you; and I keep begging of her not to think of sending for you; but I know not how it will be.

I find the little Counsellor writes to you. He is fly, and knows what he is about; and does nothing hastily, but takes time to consider of the matter. He is a pleasing young man; and though he says but little, yet he may think a great deal to the purpose. My dear Miss Catlane, you must expect

expect nothing new from this place, for we know no more of the world than if we were in the deserts of Arabia. One thing I cannot forget, that is, to be

Your sincere friend,

E. FRIENDLY.

LETTER XII.

MISS CATLANE TO MISS SUKEY.

AS soon as I received your dear letter, I ran up stairs to answer it, for I am impatient to tell you a strange event, which happened since I wrote you last.

I have found that Mrs. A— is one of the family that my dear father used to boast of, and whose mother was a Miss Wing, daughter of Sir Anthony W— of Suffolk, who is a relation of ours. She took me up stairs last night to shew me her plate, which plainly shewed, by the arms, that she was of the same family. I shewed Mrs. A— my seal ; and convinced her I was right.—“ Oh,” said she, “ I might have thought so before by your spirits, “ for they were an undaunted generation, as famous for courage as for family.” And she tells me I am as like Lady Smith, in that seeming carelessness about me, as possible ; and she too was a Wing. I had the pleasure of being in her company last week, at Sir John B—’s, and think her very agreeable. I only wish for half her wit : however Mrs. A— says there is no fear of wit in a Wing ; but as to prudence, she never heard the men had any, and some of the ladies regarded it but as a second good.—She means in respect to fortune; for

they were of so generous a disposition, that they in general died very poor.—Oh, thought I, this is what my dear mother used to tell me.

I hear Miss P— is going to be married. I am glad of it—ten thousand pounds and a fine girl is a very pretty thing ; and as to wit in a woman, where there is money it never ought to be minded. So, dear Sukey, believe me

Yours,

S. CATLANE.

LETTER XIII.

MISS CATLANE TO YOUNG MILDMAN.

IF those are happy who are persecuted for righteousness sake, I fear, Sir, you will never come under that happy denomination ; for I have read an old proverb somewhere, alluding to the hypocrite, which says, “ be not righteous overmuch :” however, as I find you are pleased to look upon me in no better light than a heathen, and have the impertinence to ask me what my religious principles are, I shall certainly comply with your request, and inform you of what my heathenish notions of things consist. You tell me that I believe in neither Providence or Fate : if so, Sir, I will inform you that my principles are founded entirely in chance.—By chance, I came into the world—by chance, I mean to live in it ; and, I suppose, you believe it will be a chance, if I do not find the way out of it.

In respect to a future state—I cannot say I have thought a great deal about that at present. But I find you and I shall as much differ in the world above,

above, as we do here below ; for your creed tells you few will be saved, while I believe few will be lost ; so that your doctrine and mine are diametrically opposite ; therefore it is not likely you should benefit much by such a heathenish correspondent.

Now for my defence against cruelty in the exercise of hunting. But first, if I am a *savage*, I must delight in cruelty, be a stranger to humanity, a lover of injustice, and scorn the very name of mercy. Yet, pray tell me, if a creature is made to die, why is it more cruel to let it have an easy death, than a cruel one. For I will venture to say, that if a hare had it's choice, it would sooner be hunted by a pack of hounds than only by two or three ; for, in the latter case, they are often worried, and left to linger out a painful life for several days ; whereas, the other dispatches them in a moment. Besides, the sight of so many enemies, adds swiftness to their speed, and puts all fear of death out of their mind. I wish you and I may die as innocent.

But perhaps you believe in transmigration, and are afraid of being transformed into a hare, and that I shall have the pleasure of hunting you. If so, be assured I will shew you no mercy. Whatever you may say against our riding on horseback, it is certainly an heroic exercise, and answers a noble purpose, for it is conducive to health, the greatest blessing in life ! and as to cowardice, you must be a stranger to the meaning of the word, by that allusion. Indeed you mistake courage for cowardice ; and no wonder, for one who has been used to loll in a carriage drawn by four old horses, bred in the ark for the purpose of dragging you and your family, from one century to another, at the rate of half a mile in half a day, it would be strange indeed if you should allow any merit to those who have courage enough to venture upon

the back of a horse. Now do tell me, Sir, how you make it appear, that riding over hedges, ditches, and gates, are cowardly actions. As to the mischief we seem to do, we turn it into good, by paying the poor people well for it, and put up that which we pull down: this is the way to bring good out of evil.

As to what you observe on the indelicacy of a woman riding on horseback, I cannot see it in that light. But upon my word I must say you are a very delicate young man, crammed full of very frightful ideas, or you could not be so shocked at the bare apprehension of indelicacy, where, in reality, there is none. But be assured, that as the gentlemen whom I have the pleasure of being acquainted with are not so refined in their sentiments as yourself, nor the ladies so delicate as that divine form which you have pictured to your imagination from one of your saints,* you may depend we shall follow the bent of our inclinations, and think it as little a crime to turn savages for our own pleasure, as you lawyers to change sides for your own interest.

I am obliged to you for the verses you sent me. As to the author, I have seen him in some book, but I forget where. I had composed some for you before I received your last; since then, I thought them too good for you; shall therefore send you some more suitable to such a depraved genius —of the two epitaphs herewith sent, take which you think proper.

I remain,

Your most obedient humble servant,

S. CATLANE.

* Alluding to the gentleman's being a Roman Catholic.

AN EPITAPH TO THE MEMORY OF J. M—, ESQ.

Rabble forbear ! nor tread upon my dust ;
 It e'er was sacred, and for ever must :
 For I such wisdom had, tho' no one knew it,
 That I was snatch'd away, and never shew it.
 But well it was that I was dragg'd from hence,
 For vain is man, compar'd to Providence.

EPITAPH THE SECOND.

Here rests the youth, in worth there's few exceed ;
 So mild in manners, and so just in deed ;
 His gentle soul was ripe betimes for grace,
 And fitted early for a happier place.
 Where angels shine in heav'n's exalted rays,
 His soul now triumphs in eternal praise.
 Intrinsic valour in so young a breast,
 Too good for earth, therefore in heaven is blest.

LETTER XIV.

MISS CATLANE TO MRS. FRIENDLY.

WE have had a great rout at B— Hall ; and as I have lately found out that I am a relation of Mrs. A—'s, which I suppose my sister has informed you of, she now introduces me to the company, by the name of the unknown relation, which occasioned the following remarks :— Lady Smith being intimate with the family, came soon, in her carriage, attended by Miss Buxton ; she was introduced into the drawing-room, to Mrs. A— and me. As soon as she entered, Mrs.

A—

A— took me by the hand, and led me to her ladyship : “ Miss Catlane, my Lady—and till lately, an un-known relation of ours” Lady Smith replied, “ I am glad you have found Miss C— to be one of us ; but upon my word, the first time I had the pleasure of seeing the young lady I thought she carried too much the air of modesty, and diffidence in her countenance, to be of any kin to me.” Mrs. A— looked rather displeased at her ; and smiled at me not to mind, nor take much notice of her : indeed, I confess I looked very foolish all the time.

Lady S— now seated herself, and presently began upon me. ‘ Do you know much, my dear, said she, of the noble family you belong to ?’ “ Very little,” I replied, “ my lady, only that my father was a gentleman, and once had a plentiful fortune, but lived to spend most of it.” “ That is enough, said she, to convince me, he was no bastard :—But do you know, child, what it is that constitutes the character of a Wing ?” “ Indeed I do not, my lady, without it is extravagance.” “ O,’ said she, ‘ I find you are not so diffident, as I took you to be ; however, I shall give you a lesson, out of my book, for you to get by heart, if you have a mind to shine as a wing. You must be as proud as Lucifer ;—endued with an insuperable arrogance ;—extravagant, without bounds ;—abounding in hospitality, when rich ; and eloquent, when poor.— Now pray what do you think of this ?” “ Indeed, my Lady, said I, the last part of your speech pleases me better than the first : but time may make me mistress of the whole.” “ Yes,’ replied she, ‘ and a little of my instructions.’ The bell rang, and in came Lady R—, and her two daughters, Sir J. T—, and several ladies.

The cards being ready, we formed into parties ; which

which put an end to her Ladyship's raillery on me. We played till past nine ; at which time the company withdrew ; and though I suffered so much from Lady S—'s wit, yet I cannot but think her a lovely woman. She was once a celebrated beauty ; but at the age of twenty-two, she had the small pox, which has quite ruined her face, but her manners and person are elegant. I am to go and stay with her next week.

When the company was gone, Mr. A— asked me how I liked Lady S—. I told him, her raillery upon me was very trying ; but her wit was an excuse for every thing her Ladyship said or did, I suppose. Mr. A— said he had no notion of that kind of wit, which only served for an inlet to impertinence. Mrs. A— said nothing : but I find they do not very much esteem her Ladyship ; therefore I must be cautious of what I say or think about her.

I am glad to find my dear sister and you are often together ; as it adds the highest satisfaction to her who is, dear Madam,

Your ever affectionate friend,

And humble servant,

S. CATLANE.

LETTER XV.

YOUNG MILDMAN TO MISS CATLANE.

AFTER laying aside being righteous over much, I wish to enter into sound reasoning upon the notions you entertain of *chance*. For my own

own part, I can scarcely believe that any person, who acknowledges a deity, can depend entirely upon chance ; neither do I think any thing can happen by chance ; but that some over-ruling power governs and disposes of all things as he seeth fit ; and not a sparrow falls, without his permission ; that vice and virtue shall have their rewards and punishments here and hereafter ; that we were made imperfect beings, that we might become perfect by good works. If we are unhappy, it is our own faults ; and I further add, that I believe in no systems which I do not comprehend—therefore must beg an explanation of your belief, and why you think few will be lost.

I cannot think your principles are heathenish : on the contrary, I think your ideas of moral perfection far beyond my conception ; yet I could wish to instill a little sound doctrine into you, and not have you go on in a life of dissipation till you are so infatuated with the pleasures of this life, that you have no desire to change. When, by an unexpected summons, you are hurried out of this world, you may find yourself as unfit as unwilling to go ; and believe me I have so great a regard for you, that I wish you to take a proper step, that you may be happy here and hereafter, with a few of my instructions, which I hope you will not refuse.

You seem to be overbearing in your arguments against my assertions of cruelty in the exercise of hunting ; and indeed you seem to be very happy in turning evil into good ; and not at a loss, I find, to turn good into evil ; or you could not have made such animadversions upon the word *savage*. Nor did I think you capable of so severe a reflection. But I deserve it all for my impertinence.

I am at a loss for words to express my obligations for the verses you sent me ; and, without joke, wish to be informed if they are of your own composing.

posing. I think the first is, but as to the second I am doubtful about. I am fearful I am likely to suffer by this diffidence in your esteem, which, believe me, will be the greatest mortification that can attend on him who is your's eternally,

JOHN MILDMAN.

LETTER XVI.

MISS S. CATLANE TO MISS CATLANE.

I Think it is a singular circumstance, your going so far to board, and into a strange family, and that they should prove to be relations. I told my mother of it ; but she is not in the least surprised, for she says my great-grandfather had four and twenty children ; who were enough, indeed, to stock all Suffolk.

Oh, Sally ! my dear mother looks so cross, and does so scold, that there is not a young man in the place that dares come near the house ; so there is no fear of my being run away with.

Mrs. F— shewed me your letter. I cannot think how you can like such a character as Lady Smith ; for, if she had said to me, what she did to you, instead of thinking her a wit, I should have thought her mad, and fit for nothing but a rout of bedlamites. Pray let me hear the whole history of her ; for I think it must be a whimsical one ; and as you are going to stay with her a few days, you will very likely come at the genuine account of it, which I long to hear.

I find you figure away, with your Sir John's and Sir F—'s, and routs and drums. Indeed I cannot forbear laughing, when I think if my dear mother knew

knew it, she would soon drum you home, and make you dance to as pretty a tune as ever you heard in your life ; and perhaps give you as good a chase, as any you have had, since you rode a hunting.

You will be sorry when you hear the amiable Mrs. H— has lost her character, as well as her peace of mind, by marrying a man, who really never was designed for any thing but bedlam : the men say, they are both in fault ; and the women declare she is the worst of the two : though they give no reason why nor wherefore—therefore I cannot help thinking how hard is the lot of her, who falls into the hands of those, who, either from inexperience, or consummate ignorance, condemn our unhappy sex, more out of a wanton cruelty, than from any other motive ; they give their unfeeling sentiments against those, whose cause, or even persons, they are utter strangers to ; as such it appears to me, to be the great propensity women, in general, have for talking ; which, joined to a confined, mean education, lead them into their darling foible. But were they in the early part of their lives, instructed in a manner becoming rational beings, there would be as little reason for complaining of the present prevailing vice, *scandal*, amongst our sex, as there is in that of the other, who fancy themselves so much better taught. But were the same principles of knowledge instilled into our minds as in that wise part of the creation called *man*, we should soon convince the world that nature has not been deficient in bestowing upon us minds capable of the highest improvement.

Your's affectionately,

S. CATLANE.

LETTER

LETTER XVII.

MRS. FRIENDLY TO MISS CATLANE.

YOUR sister and I have laughed very heartily, at your description of Lady Smith ; as you are now upon a visit with her for a week, I hope we shall benefit something from it ; as we are in great expectation of hearing wonderful things from so strange a character.

I will now give you a description of a dance, your sister and myself had the honour to be at. It was at B— fair ; and as we dined at B— Hall we could do no less than attend the ladies to the dance. It was the sign of the Hog in Armour. I was told there used to be very genteel company meet there ; and they once had the honour of a 'Squire R—'s presence at their dance—however I must leave what it may have been, to tell you what it now is. When we first entered, we observed twenty or thirty figures, standing in the middle of the room, in such confusion, that I supposed they had been fighting ; but on hearing one of the masculine gender, as I thought by the voice, call out “ why thou *knows* well enough, Tom, that is the *auld* way we used to dance Bob and Joan. I want to *daunce* it that way as how we *daunced* it the night before I listed for a soldier.”

I now began to find what company we had got into ; and as it was likely to afford some diversion, I sat down to take a view of this motley group, and could not but observe their dress, which was as singular as their persons ; for the girls were most of them in what they call riding dresses ; and as to their heads, some wore their hair in a kind of club, others had it tied up with a piece of black ribbon, and hung down their backs like the tail of

E a monkey,

a monkey. Their hats were equally curious—some very large without any shape; others in form of a beef-eater's cap; and one, who had a mind to outshine the rest, had one in shape of a scollopped tin dish in which, about a century ago, mince pies were used to be made.

The gentlemen were dressed equally curious—in a kind of gown and coat; and a silk handkerchief loose about their necks. To conclude this elegant group; every now and then they would roar out like peals of thunder; and on enquiring the cause, I was told it was nothing more than a mark of approbation when any of the company ran foul of each other, and by way of eminence they would cry “that's your sort.”

Your sister and I, after laughing very heartily, composed ourselves as well as we could, took leave of the company and withdrew, not a little pleased with the entertainment, and shall conclude with wishing you as merry at Lady Smith's, as your sister and I were at the Hog in Armour dance.

E. FRIENDLY.

LETTER XVIII.

MISS CATLANE TO YOUNG MILDMAN.

How vain is man; who thinks he all things knows;
Arrives at self-conceit, and then a blockhead grows.

THIS alludes to your asserting that you believe no systems, but those which you can easily comprehend; if so, you are ignorant indeed; particularly in the divine system; which you profess to talk so much of. This makes me think of a country

a country man, who was reading the newspaper; and saw an account of an earthquake in some foreign parts, which had swallowed up the whole place; when he had read it, he threw down the paper in a great passion, and wished the printer hanged for putting such lies in; for, as he had never heard such a thing in the parish he lived in; his ideas were too confined, to think it possible there should be a place so far off, or that such a thing, which appeared so wonderful to him, could happen without his knowledge.

You wish to be informed, by way of solid reason, what I mean by dependence upon chance. This is, I suppose, by way of puzzle for me, as you well know I have nothing to do with reason; that I leave for you; but still believe in chance in respect to the immaterial things which happen in this life. I am sorry I cannot agree with you in respect to rewards and punishments in this world; which seldom or never happen; for I will give you a convincing proof to the contrary. I knew a man so famous for his piety, meekness, and charity; and so strictly just, and benevolent, that he was stiled the good man of B—m. Yet this righteous man, tho' in a great way of business, and had a great deal of money, was unfortunate enough to come to extreme poverty; and at last died in a workhouse. No man was ever heard to say he was guilty of an imprudent action; so that we poor, blind sighted mortals, thought it a mystery; but I dare say you can account for it. Now to convince you fortune does not always smile on the just, nor frown upon the unjust, in this world, I will refer you to your own family; who I believe to be the most prosperous of any in the kingdom. You will excuse me, but I never heard any of you were famous for either piety, benevolence or any other good quality. For my part, I am a sceptic in respect to works, and think you are too much like the

proud man in the gospel, who lifted up his eyes, and thanked his maker he was not like other men. Now to be serious with you. By believing in two deities, in respect to the Saviour of the world, I believe him to be equal with the Supreme Being ; and that we can never inherit eternal life, but through his intercession.

By this time I hope you are satisfied in regard to my religious principles; but I shall be very happy to resolve any other questions you may please to ask me.

You wish to be informed if I made those verses I sent you ; indeed I did ; for I never refer to any author for nonsense ; I am always well supplied from my own genius.

I am, Sir, with the highest esteem for your uncommon share of knowledge, your admirer

S. CATLANE.

LETTER XIX.

MISS CATLANE TO MRS. FRIENDLY.

I AM now with the charming Lady Smith ; she sent her carriage for me yesterday, or I believe I should not have gone ; for Mrs. A— did not seem pleased at my going, as she told me she should be dull without me.

When I arrived at Lady Smith's, she met me in the hall. " Well, my little friend," said she, " I sent for you, thinking you might not come without." She led me into the parlour, and dinner being near ready, we prepared for it. She told me I must excuse spending the first day rather unpleasant, as she had been disappointed in company which

which she expected ; " but," added she, " I will make it agreeable some how or other. Pray," continued she, " Miss Catlane, what did you think of me the first time you saw me at Mrs. A—'s?"

" Indeed, my Lady," said I, " I thought you was very severe upon me; yet the manner you conducted yourself in it, was far from being displeasing to me."

" You little know," said she, " my reason for giving myself such unnecessary airs before Mrs. A—; for to tell you the truth, I am not very fond of her; and I flatter myself you had good sense enough to find I had a double meaning in every word I said to you. Some day or other I will give you my history, and then you will be better able to judge."

Dinner coming in, put an end to our discourse for the present; but as soon as the cloth was drawn, and the servants had left the room, her Ladyship asked me how we should spend the day? if she should send for Captain D— and his lady, to play a pool; or if we should drink tea early and take a ride in the carriage; or stay at home and amuse ourselves in chat. I thought this was a good opportunity for her history, for I longed to hear it, on account of what Mrs. A— had told me, which was " that her father was obliged to keep Lady Smith, before she married, otherwise she must have gone out to service, for what she knew." I therefore begged Lady Smith to give me her history now, for it would afford me more pleasure and satisfaction, than any thing she could propose. She smiled, and said " you are a little curious I find, but you shall have it." I shall therefore conclude this, my dear Mrs. Friendly, and inclosed send you the history as related by herself—and believe me to be your's sincerely,

S. CATLANE.

HISTORY OF LADY SMITH.

MY father and Mrs. A—'s mother are own brother and sister; and my grandfather dying at the age of fifty eight, left my father with a brother and three sisters with an estate of two thousand pounds per annum, but very much incumbered; and dying without a will, left the younger part of his family entirely dependent on the elder brother, who was my father; and he was of that noble and generous spirit, that after being at a very great expence for his brother, who was then in Jamaica, he gave the girls five thousand pounds a piece to get them husbands, which they soon did; one was married to Sir J. R—, the other to Doctor B—, Mrs. A—'s father, and the youngest died a little before her brother; and after my father had completely ruined himself, to make his brother and sisters' fortune, he died, and left my mother and me wholly dependant upon our friends, which of all evils is the worst. Sir J. R— took my mother, and Doctor B— took me.

As I was very young, and not knowing better, I thought I should be very happy with my cousins, particularly Mary, who is now Mrs. A—; for she always professed a great fondness for me, and was mostly with us when my father was living. But, alas! I had not been long with her before she began to abuse her power over me, and would be always telling me how imprudent my father had been to make away his fortune, and leave me worse than a beggar. Not being used to this kind of treatment, I was highly provoked, and called her a saucy, ignorant girl; said, her family had ruined my poor father, and she ought to have been the last person

in

in the world who should have dared to tell me of my father's imprudence, when that very imprudence was, giving her mother five thousand pounds, in doing which he had wronged his own family, and you thus to behave to me with such base ingratitude. She gave me no answer, but went directly and told her mother that I had called her a saucy ignorant girl; I overheard her, and ran to my aunt and told her the insults I had met with from Miss Mary, and complained very loudly of her behaviour to me.

My aunt, who does not want for good sense, chided her severely for her conduct, and told her not to dare to behave in so rude a manner to me any more, at the same time gave her a charge not to tell her father; for he was a man of such pride and arrogance, and so little understanding, that he must have thought his child had been in the right; and the whole house would be put into confusion. We had no more words for some time; when one day as I was dressing to visit Sir J. R.—, she came into my room, and said, “you look very fine to day, Miss W— but I think such fine things do not become you.” I asked her why? “Because,” said she, “none but people of fortune should dress: and pray what will become of you when my father dies? perhaps you will then be obliged to go to service.”

“Indeed, Miss,” said I, “ ‘tis not impossible but I may live to see you come to something worse than that.”

I was so much hurt at this address from her, that I sat down and cried, and she left me. But not long after she came into the room again and asked me what I was crying for. I made her no answer. She thinking her mother would see I was unhappy, asked my pardon, and told me she only envied me, I looked so handsome in my new cloaths; for I had that day a new dress, for my mother took care I should not want for wearing apparel; nor did Mary want

want for a little art, when she thought she could make it answer her purpose. She begged hard of me to forgive her, and promised never to offend again. "Indeed, Miss," said I, "as to forgiving you I may; but believe me I shall never forget you."

Sir John R— finding I was unhappy with Doctor B— took me away, and I went with him and his family to London; and one night being at the opera, I saw an elegant gentleman come into the opposite box and take much notice of some one in ours, which I thought to be Lady R— for she really was a very fine woman at that time. However, as we went out of the Opera House, I saw the same gentleman follow us, and I heard him ask the servant where Sir John lived. The next day, soon after breakfast, who should come in but Lord Smith Daval, (for that I found to be the gentleman's name) to ask Sir John's permission to make his addresses to me. Indeed the splendid appearance his Lordship made, added to his personal deportment, was attraction enough for Sir John, to gain his consent, without much hesitation; therefore, after some little enquiry into the character of Lord S— the family were very willing to rid themselves of such an expence as my mother and I must be to them. And I must own it appeared a very advantageous match, even had I been a person of good fortune, much more as I had no right to expect a shilling; and I must confess my vanity was not a little flattered at the thoughts of being released from the dependent state in which I had so long been, and raised to so exalted a title, without thinking much about the man, or the consequences which might ensue from so hasty a match.

It was not long before I became the wife of Lord Smith Daval; who involved me in more distress, than ever I had known before; for as I had no fortune, I could expect no jointure; neither

ther did Sir John think proper to ask for one; therefore I was entirely dependent upon my Lord's generosity and prudence; and as he was too fashionable a man to have the least of the latter in his composition, I was brought to the want of a piece of bread. However, I must return to my friends and relations. As soon as they heard I was come to a title, I had letters and cards from all parts, both in town and country, and old Doctor B— put himself to the expence of buying a pair of horses extraordinary that he might honour my Lord and me with a visit in a coach and six. To town they came, the old Doctor, his wife, Miss Mary, and her sister, and three servants. They stayed three months with us. You would have taken our house more for an hotel, than any thing else, for I had three families came to see me, who said they were relations, and then lived at Salisbury; I suppose they might be, but I dare say if I had wanted any favour from them, they would have known nothing about the relationship.

I will now give you a description of Lord Smith Daval.—In person he was tall; his features were majestic and pleasing; and his countenance commanded respect; in manners he was the essence of good breeding; as to his disposition, it was as various as his dress, which was always very fantastical; and so infatuated was he to a magnificent appearance, that he only seemed to live when the house was crowded with company, servants and carriages, like the drawing room at St. James's—and for four yerrs that I was married to him, I never had half an hour's conversation with him at a time, nor do I know whether he was a Jew, Turk or Infidel, tho' I believe the latter; for I remember on asking him one Sunday morning if he would honour me with his company to church, he said the fear of being asked that favour, was the very reason he in general kept from home on

that

that day, and added, " You know, my Lady, I
" do not like to deny you any thing that is con-
" sistent with my reason or dignity." I begged
his pardon, set off for church, and his Lordship for
a noted gaming house, as I afterwards found out.

I had my card routs and concerts, whenever I pleased; and used to send his Lordship an invitation in form. Once I remember he refused coming to a concert in his own house, because I had not sent him a card in the morning; for, though we lived both under the same roof, yet we had our different apartments, and never broke through the rules of good breeding so far as to approach each other, without sending word; and one morning I received a note to inform me Lord Smith Daval would do himself the pleasure to call upon me at one o'clock, if I was not engaged, for he had something of importance to relate to me. When he came in, I saw he was very much discomposed. He said he was sorry to be obliged to come into my presence, with an air so unbecoming his person; but I had degraded myself and him, he said, so much, that it was not consistent with his honour to put up with it any longer. I was thunderstruck at this speech, nor could I believe my ears. However, I mustered up courage sufficient to ask him—
" Pray, my Lord, inform me what I have done
" to incur your displeasure?"

" Why, Lady Smith Daval, said he, you have
" been down into the kitchen, I hear, and repre-
" manded the servants, and told them they were
" extravagant, and have given orders to have all
" the cold victuals given to the poor: as such, my
" house is to be made an hospital, and my servants
" made slaves to wait on all the distressed objects
" you may invite. Indeed, Lady S—, you have
" hurt me so much by your conduct, that I had
" rather have been drawn limb from limb, than
" have you expose yourself and me, in this man-

" ner :

" ner: as to being ruined, I would with pleasure,
" sooner than my servants should be contradicted."

" Well my Lord, replied I, be assured I will
" never again offend you, by going into the kit-
" chen; nor will I give the victuals to the poor,
" without you are agreeable. But it is certainly
" very inhuman to give that to the dogs, which
" so many poor souls would be glad of."

" These my Lady, said he, are the contracted
" notions, which people have in the country; but
" in this polite place we know better; besides, if
" it was right, it is so d—d ungenteel to do a good
" thing, that I cannot bear the thoughts of it,
" and you will very much oblige me, if you will
" do your charities in a more private way; as it
" will then be less likely to bring down the ridi-
" cule of the fashionable circle upon us, for I fear
" I shall have the appellation of the GOOD LORD
" SMITH DAVAL, and shall have CHARITY
" chalked up behind my carriage, and be followed
" about like the *Monstrous Crows*, by the poor,
" who will be always saluting me with *God bless
your honour.*—This might please people in the
" country, my Lady, but for my part, I would
" rather stand in the pillory." I thanked his Lord-
ship for his advice, and told him as I found it was
so much against his dignity and honour, to do a
good action, I would in time become fashionable
myself, that he might have no reason to upbraid
me on that subject. He made me a low bow, and
withdrew,

" Good heavens! said I to myself, what a hus-
" band have I got—can it be possible that he should
" be such a dupe, and be ashamed of giving his
" cold victuals to the poor, for fear of being
" laughed at?" Notwithstanding this seeming
impropriety in his conduct, I believe he was na-
turally of a very humane disposition; at the same
time

time would sacrifice his soul to be thought a man of prodigality and magnificence.

I was engaged that day to meet a large party at Sir Edward Young's, but I was so unhappy at what had passed, I was obliged to send a servant to inform them I was slightly indisposed, and found myself incapable of going out that day. At four o'clock his Lordship came home to dress, and asked his servant if I was going out to dinner; he told him no, for I was not very well. He wrote me a note, informing me he was very sorry to hear of my indisposition, but that I must excuse his personal attendance, for he had kept a Duke in waiting for him above an hour, but if possible he would do himself the honour of supping with me that evening. I smiled at his vanity, yet in my heart I wished to see him. About half past ten he came;—as soon as he had entered the room, “ My Lady, said he, “ I hope I have not been the innocent cause of your indisposition; if I have, it will make me very miserable;—for my angel, said he, taking me by the hand, believe me you are my second deity.”

“ Why, my Lord, said I, it gives me great pleasure to find you acknowledge one Deity, in preference to the rest; at the same time, I fear you think the second unworthy even of your esteem.”

“ Exalted woman! cried he, what do you mean?—I married you because all the world thought you handsome; for while I kept you company, had any man living said you was not a perfect beauty, I would never have married you.”

“ Then I find, my Lord, your wife was the choice of the public.”

“ Entirely so, my Lady; for I had none of my own—no fashionable man would think of such a thing; therefore we are always ready to change, whenever

" whenever opportunity suits ; and if Lady Smith
 " Daval, should see a gentleman she should like
 " better than me, or I should see a lady that is
 " more admired for her beauty and wit than your
 " Ladyship, we have nothing to do but to get a
 " divorce, and marry again."

As I thought him in joke, I smiled, and told him, " If my happiness depended entirely upon the
 " fleeting charms of beauty, I have very little
 " prospect, my Lord, of seeing many happy days."

" Oh, said his Lordship, you may be admired
 " by some, these twenty years : surely that is long
 " enough."

" No, my Lord, there is one person in the
 " world whom I hope will never forget to ad-
 " mire me."

" Lady S—, said his Lordship, you look se-
 " rious ; I will play you a tune upon the harpsi-
 " chord, and I hope that will make you more
 " cheerful."

His Lordship did not think proper to give me an answer as I wished ; and supper being served up, the tune was soon over, and we sat down, only his Lordship and myself ; a circumstance which had never happened before, nor did it ever after. I eat but little, for I found myself very unhappy ; though I did not know very well for what ; yet there was something in the conversation that foreboded what afterwards happened.

After supper, his Lordship asked me if I was well enough to dress and attend him to the masquerade. I told him I was much obliged to him, but the pleasure of his company was more agreeable to me, than all the public places in the world ; and if I might be permitted to have my choice, I should rather spend the evening with him at home.

" Upon my word, my Lady, replied his Lord-
 " ship, I am sorry to find you are grown such a
 " domestic animal ; for most women of fashion

" would have been heartily tired of their husband's
 " company before half this time, and I had rather,
 " a thousand times, see you in public, with a
 " train of admirers after you, than see you sit here
 " as if you was going to a funeral :— Indeed it is
 " my greatest happiness to see you meet with so
 " much adoration from the polite circle. And
 " suppose I was to indulge you in this silly whim,
 " of staying with you this evening, pray, my
 " Lady," said he, laughing, " how should we amuse
 " ourselves ?—for my part, I am already stupified."
 " I am sorry my Lord, answered I, you have
 " spent your time so disagreeably ; but be assured
 " I will never again wish you to do penance in
 " this way."

" This promise, replied his Lordship, shall keep
 " me to night." He rang the bell and ordered up
 some cards ; but as I was not in much humour
 to play, and wished to enter into a serious con-
 versation, I asked his Lordship if he was fond of
 reading, he replied, " No ; for great authors I
 " do not understand, and as to little ones, they
 " are beneath my notice ; therefore I never read
 " any of them."

" Surely Lord S—, you joke ;—no one can be a
 " rational companion, without some knowledge of
 literature."

" If those are your notions, Lady S—, I would
 " have you not deceive yourself ; for I have no-
 " thing to do with *reason*, as you may see by all
 " my actions ; men of fashion seldom have."

I found myself obliged to play, and therefore sat
 down, and continued playing till one o'clock. He
 then ordered his servant to dress him, and went to
 the masquerade, wishing me a good night, and ex-
 pressed much concern at keeping me up so late,
 indisposed as I was.

I now found what a fashionable husband I had
 got, which really made me very unhappy ; but
 finding

finding his Lordship too proud, or too ignorant to be dictated to, I was determined to make myself as easy as possible ; and to endeavour to please him in his own way. Next morning he came into my dressing-room, and asked me how I did ? I told him I was much better, and that I wished I had gone to the masquerade with him. He said it would have added greatly to his happiness if I had : “ and believe me, continued his Lordship, there was not a lady in the room half so divine as that lovely form in the glass.”

I was putting on my cap. “ Indeed my Lord, you will make me an absolute piece of vanity if you talk to me thus.”

“ Are you engaged, my Lady, to day ?”

“ No, my Lord.”

“ Then I hope to have the pleasure of driving your Ladyship down to Windsor, in my new carriage.”

“ I shall be exceedingly happy, my Lord, to accompany you any where you wish to go.”

“ You will promise me, then, Lady S—, not to trouble me with your D—d reasonable subjects.”

“ Depend upon it, my Lord, you shall hear as little reason from me as you can possibly wish.”

His Lordship now went to dress ; and I did the same, and to study how I should behave so as to make myself agreeable to my rational Lord. I now found, that to please him, was to praise him for his taste, his darling foible. An elegant phæton now appeared at the door, with four new horses ; and we had no less than six servants to attend us that day ; and, poor man ! so elated was he at the appearance he made, that he seemed to ride upon the winds ; and I really thought him beside himself ; for all the way he went, he kept teasing me to observe how such an one looked at his carriage—how another

ther looked at his horses : and then it was, " See
" my Lady how they look behind them."

" Indeed, my Lord, and well they may ; for
" I never saw any thing half so grand as the
" figure you make to day, and the elegant stile
" in which your Lordship drives is beyond
" description." Such was the conversation all
the day. He never seemed so happy with me
before ; because *then* I used to check his vanity,
which broke his heart, *now* I strived all I could
to flatter it. We now were the happiest couple
in the world, or at least we seemed to be ; but
for myself, I was far from it. As for gallants,—
if I had not half the gentlemen at a public
place buzzing about me, he was apprehensive I
did not look well ; or that I was out of temper,
or that something or other must be amis with
me. For I remember we had been to the Pan-
theon one evening, and the Duke of G— was
there, who always took particular notice of me ;
indeed more than was agreeable to me ; I there-
fore avoided him as much as possible, which
Lord Smith Daval observing, asked me what
were my reasons for so doing. I told his Lord-
ship that his Grace had used an expression very
unbecoming a married woman to hear. His
Lordship laughing, said " it was much more
" unbecoming your Ladyship to affront a no-
" bleman." Indeed I was left at full liberty to
follow my own inclinations ; which is, in my
opinion, the only thing to keep a woman chaste ;
and though I was not married to a man over-
burthened with sense, I thought him the most
pleasing *irrational* being in the world ; and good
manners and attention to our sex, often make
up the deficiency, and over-balances the want of
good sense. His Lordship always shewed me
the highest respect ; and never appeared so happy
as when he saw other gentlemen do the same ;
which

which I believe they did more to please him, than out of compliment to me; and his Lordship was entirely lost to every thing, but pride, flattery, self-conceit, and falsehood, which soon proved his ruin.

I must now return to my relations in the country. One day I received a letter from Miss Mary, begging of me to go down there, for an affair had happened in their family, which, if I did not go down, and endeavour to appease her father, she knew not what would become of herself. I could not conceive what this fray could be. I shewed the letter to Lord Smith Daval, who gave me his consent to go down the next day. I first called upon Sir J. R—, for I had not seen my mother since I was married, for her health would not permit her to live in town. When I arrived there, they treated me more like a princess than a relation; and never did I see so conspicuously the frailty of man as on this occasion!—the pompous treatment from those who had thought so little of me before, rather disgusted, than pleased me. I told them I was sorry I could make no greater stay, as I had received a letter from Miss B—, who informed me that something had happened in the family, which required my immediate assistance. I ordered my carriage, and set off for Doctor B—'s; when I arrived, I sent my servant with a card; and the Doctor came out hat in hand, which he seldom took off his head but once a year to the Judge of Bury Assizes.—As soon as I entered the parlour, he informed me, that his daughter Mary was with child by his coachman; and he stamped and raved like a madman. “Upon my word Doctor,” said I, “you may thank yourself for all this; “for you always kept your daughters confined “like slaves; and was so very rigid with them, “that you thought it a crime in them if they

" even looked at a man ; and believe me, if they
 " had had more liberty, this accident never would
 " have happened." He looked sternly at me,
 but gave me no answer. I asked him where Miss
 Mary was. " I know not, my Lady, nor do I
 " wish to know. I will never see her again,
 " for her meanness in having any thing to say
 " to my coachman. What, could she find no-
 " body better that she could have had?" I could
 not forbear laughing. " Nobody, Sir," said I,
 " that she could get at; *you took care of that.*"

The Doctor always used his daughters very cruelly; for if they by chance saw a man, while they were standing at the window, for they were seldom or never suffered to go out of the house, they were obliged to run from it, as if they saw something frightful;—his eldest daughter, who married Doctor S—, had nearly lost her life, by a fright which she received when her father saw her talking with a young gentleman she met in the Park one evening as she was coming home.

I asked the Doctor if he would give me leave to see Mary? " No, my Lady, nor shall any one else." " Then, sir, good morning." I was going away, but the old gentleman ran after me, and begged my pardon, and told me he did not know where his daughter was, but he believed the servants did. I desired to speak with the housekeeper, who informed me she was at a little cottage not far from the house; she gave me a proper direction and I went to her. When I came to the hut, a poor woman opened the door, who I remembered had been a servant in Doctor B—'s family at the time I was there:—She knew me and begged I would go up stairs and see Mary; I told her I came for that purpose.—There I saw poor Mary overwhelmed with grief. I begged she would not be unhappy, but make herself as easy as possible. She told me she was sure her father would never see her more;

nor

nor would he allow her any thing ; and that she was obliged to these poor people for a morsel of bread, and a shelter to protect her from the weather, or she must have starved ; for not one of her relations would suffer her to go near them. " Com-
 " fort yourself, my dear," said I, " I will not go
 " to town, till I have persuaded your father to
 " take proper care of you, or to let me take you to
 " London." She was highly pleased with this promise, and I left her in much better spirits than I found her, and returned to the Doctor's, and told him I had seen his daughter, and was much surprised, and exceedingly hurt to find her in so mean a situation, " how much, Sir," said I, " is it
 " beneath a person of your fortune, to suffer your
 " own child to be shut up in such a place, with
 " not a morsel of any thing to eat, but what is
 " given her by the bounty of this poor woman,
 " who can scarce get bread for her own family."

He replied, " she was better off than she deserved, and she should have nothing from him." I asked him if he would give me leave to take her to London with me.

" No, my lady," said he, " I will send her to
 " France ; I know what to do with the strumpet."

" Indeed Doctor," said I, " you are not in
 " your senses, if you talk in that manner ; I
 " must say it is very unbecoming your profession
 " as a clergyman, to shew so little compassion for
 " your own child."

" I tell you, my Lady, I do not wish ever to
 " see her more."

" I do not wish you to see her," I replied,
 " only let me take her out of that miserable place
 " she is now in."

" With all my heart," said the old man, " I
 " care not what you do with her, so I never hear
 " of her again."

I took

I took leave of the Doctor, and called upon Mary, and begged her to be ready to set off for London with me, in a few days; she received this good news with much joy, and I took leave of her and went to Sir John's, and told them all that had passed. I saw they thought I was wrong; and my mother asked me, how I thought Lord Smith would like such a companion. I told her, if his Lordship was ashamed of a good action, that is no reason why his wife should.

A few days after I set off for London. I called and took Miss B— and the next day we arrived at Lord Smith Dayal's, who received me and my visitor very politely, and told me he should do himself the honour to dine with us that day. " You will complete my happiness, my Lord," said I, " for I have something of great importance to communicate to you."

" Tell me now," said his Lordship, " as we are alone."

Miss B— was in her dressing room. So I told him poor Mary's situation, and that I had taken the liberty of bringing her to town with me; and told him my intentions were to get her a genteel lodging suitable to her station, and to take care of her till the Doctor should think proper to see her. His Lordship approved of my scheme, and the next day I took an apartment for her, and she passed for a young widow, who had lately lost her husband. About six weeks after she was brought to bed of a fine boy, and as soon as she had recovered, I put the child out to nurse, and took her to my own house, where she remained half a year before her father sent to enquire after her. At length Mary received a letter from her father, wherein he informed her, if I would honor him with my company, and take his daughter into the country, he would receive her with pleasure. Accordingly I went with her, and as there

there was no mention made of the child, I did not take him with us, and I found that Miss B— did not much wish to take it.

When we arrived at the Doctor's, he received us very politely; embraced his daughter, and told her he forgave her all that was passed; which made her and myself very happy. I staid with them three days, and then returned to London, after thus reconciling the father and daughter to each other.

About a week after I returned home, I was taken with the small pox; all my fear was that Lord Smith would never see me after—I sent for him into my room, and told him, “ I must now take my last farewell of the best of husbands, for if I live, he will never bear to see me more; which thought is worse than death to me.”

“ Do not distress yourself, my amiable woman,” replied his Lordship, “ you will always be lovely in my sight.” And he took an affectionate leave of me and withdrew. When he was gone I tried to compose myself, but could not, and for want of rest I grew delirious, and continued in that state six weeks, when the disorder abated and I became more sensible; but for want of proper care, I had torn my face and arms, and made myself such a frightful object I was not fit to be seen.

As soon as I was recovered so as to speak and sit up in my bed, I asked my nurse how her master did; she told me she did not know, for he had not been much at home since I had been ill. I told her I would not see him for the world in the condition I was in. She said she thought Lord Smith Daval had too much sense to dislike you for what Providence had been pleased to ordain; and he had always, when at home, asked after your Ladyship. I concluded from

From this he was determined not to see me again: I therefore refused seeing any company. I was now just arrived at the age of twenty two, and found myself as reconciled to my unhappy fate, as any person at that age could be.

One day as I sat reading in my dressing room, I heard his Lordship come up stairs, in great haste, and having such a desire to see him, I ran to the door without any ceremony; he started back, and looked quite shocked at the sight of me, nor could he scarce utter a word.—But this was no more than I expected. When his Lordship had somewhat recovered himself—“ Is “ it possible, my Lady,” said he, “ that you “ can have suffered such a change and yet be “ alive?”

“ Yes, my Lord, and I find I must still suffer a much greater.”

“ What can that be,” asked his Lordship.

“ The loss of your esteem, my Lord.”

“ That is impossible,” replied he; “ but “ your Ladyship must excuse me now, for I “ am obliged to go into the country for a few “ days; when I come back I will do myself the “ pleasure of waiting upon you—I should have “ done it before, but I have had business of “ great importance.” He took his leave, and left me with my poor heart almost broke. There was something so slighting in his manner of addressing me after not having seen each other for three months, as quite distressed me, and made me indeed miserable. But I could not help attributing his unhappiness to something more than the loss I had sustained.

It was near a week before he returned, when he sent me a card, informing me he would honour me with his company to tea. About eight o'clock he came, and seemed much surprized at not finding me in my drawing room, where I used

used to receive him; I told him I had not been into it since I was ill, nor did I mean it, without it was to please him, for I had not seen my face yet, nor did I wish it. He smiled, and asked me if I remembered what it once was, "if you do, Lady S—," said he, "I would advise you never to see what a change there is. But you must have a mask, as like your own picture as you can, and always wear it; then we may visit together, and no one know what a devastation that fatal disorder has made."

"As to that, my Lord, if you are agreeable, I had much rather be at home, and see no company, than think of going into public places with you, who will always be ashamed of me."

"Your remaining in doors, my Lady, will hurt your health and spirits; therefore you must visit, and receive your visitors in a mask, for upon my soul I do insist I may never see you without one: never mind, my Lady, all things have but a time; we have had ours; and I could wish not to have lived to have seen this day."

"Tell me, my Lord, what you mean by *this day* being so disagreeable to you; if it is the sight of me, send me to the most distant parts; I should even there be happy, if my dear Lord would only condescend to write to me." He affected a smile at this, and replied, "do not be silly, my dear girl—but who do you think would like to see a pretty face spoiled?"

Tea being over, he made an apology for a pre-engagement he had made, and I saw him no more till next day, when he came to ask me to favour him with my company to a masquerade in Hanover-square. As I thought this a very proper place for me to go to in my situation, I assented; but soon after he was gone, I recollect I had not been out,

nor

nor seen company since I got up of the small-pox, and had received cards from all my acquaintances, which I had never answered. I therefore saw so much impropriety in complying with Lord S—'s request, that I sent him a note to that effect. He returned for answer, the objection I made was of no consequence to him now, and if I would give him the pleasure of my company, he should be very happy. I began to think he had seen his folly, in having his house always crowded with visitors, and that I had now a good opportunity of dropping their acquaintance which I was very happy to do.

I dressed for the masquerade, and went in the character of a shepherd, and at eleven o'clock he sent to know if I was ready, and finding I was, he came running up stairs to hand me to the carriage, and when we were seated, he said, " Well, " my Lady, I am happy to see you once more " abroad, and may you long live to enjoy your " health and wit, when every other comfort is " erased from your mind."

I was thunderstruck at these words, and said, " am I going to lose you, my Lord?"

" Indeed, my Lady," replied he, " it was a " pity you ever found me; but suppose I die, you " can never expect to see me any more, for in ano- " ther world you will be exalted far above me."

" This, my Lord, is not an answer to my ques- " tions, therefore I must beg an explanation."

" Indeed, my Lady, you must excuse me; for " you know I never enter upon any serious sub- " ject; besides, we are near the house." He took out of his pocket a beautiful mask, and bidding me take off my own, and put it on, said, " It is the " first face I have ever had in my power to give " you Lady S—, and I therefore beg you to wear " it for my sake."

The carriage now drove up to the door, before I had time to answer him. We entered, but, alas ! I had

I had no pleasure the whole evening. I join'd, as is the custom from the characters we assume, the shepherds ; and Lord S—, the Spanish Dons. I danced to be sure, but it was to keep me from thinking too much. Looking to one corner of the room, I observed his Lordship alone ; I went up to him and asked him if he was not well ? He told me he was, and asked if I would retire ? I told him I should be very glad to go. The carriage was at the door, and never was I so happy as at being released from such confusion. When we were seated in the coach, " my Lady," said his Lordship, " how have you spent the evening ?"

" Why to tell you the truth, my Lord, my mind was so taken up with other things, that I scarcely knew where I was."

" It was just the same with me" replied he.

" Believe me, my Lord, it is your late seriousness which is the cause of my inquietude."

" Do not, my dear Lady Smith, do not add daggers to my soul :—do not fix your mind too much upon an object so unworthy your esteem. " But tell me," continued his Lordship, " did you think you should ever be in public with me again ?"—I found he started this to change the discourse.

" No, my Lord ; I thought you had placed all your affections upon the paltry charms of a pretty face ; and when those were fled, I could have no hopes left of ever after being agreeable in your sight."

" Indeed," said he, " I wish it was so."

" Are you sorry, then, you loved me my Lord ?"

" No," said he, " did I tell you I was ? indeed, Lady Smith, you must excuse me, for I know not what I say."

" But pray tell me, my Lord, what is it that makes you so unhappy ?"

" I believe I am not well, said he; I am not unhappy."

" Where is your pain, my Lord."

" All over me, said he;—but my dear woman, do not ask me any more questions."

I said no more, for I fancied he was very unhappy in his mind, altho' he would not own it; and I could not but dread the worst.

When we got home, he asked me what I would eat or drink. I told him any thing he would partake of with me:—as to supper, we had supped at the masquerade. He went up to the side board and brought me a slice of tongue, and ordered a bottle of old hock, saying, " you may drink now, Bess;—no fear of spoiling your face."

" I am glad, my Lord," said I, " it occasions you so much mirth; but as it is your own, surely you may do as you please with it."

" I beg pardon, Lady Smith," said his Lordship; " but you have too much sense to mind a mad-man."—with thoughtful steps he was walking across the room, and had forgot to give me some wine.

" My Lord," said I, " shall I have a glass of wine?"—he brought me one, and desired me to drink to him.

" Health and prosperity, my Lord; and may you be kind enough to tell me what it is that makes you so unhappy."

" May the greatest of blessings be your's, Lady S—; and may I never live to be the villain, who would tell you any thing to make you miserable."—As he drank, the glass had nearly fallen from his hand; but he recovered himself, and asked me if it was not time for bed.

I found it was impossible for me to learn the cause of his unhappiness; and he still grew more uneasy, and whenever I mentioned it to him, he went out of the room.

Thus

Thus it passed on for five or six weeks ; till one morning, he came up stairs in a great hurry, and told me he was going out for a week, and said, "Lady Smith Daval, be good while I am gone," and ran down so fast, that I had not time to speak to him ;—I went to the window to see him go out, but found he was not gone ; I rang the bell, and asked if Lord S— was below, the servant said he was ;—I sent word I wished to see him, but he never came, nor sent any apology for it, therefore thought it was the last time I should ever have the pleasure of seeing him. About a week after, two gentlemen came and desired to see Lady Smith Daval. They were shewn up, and I partly guessed their business. They asked me if I had heard from Lord S— since he set out for France. I told them I did not know he was gone to France. They shewed me a letter wherein he informed them he was there, and that he would write to me in a few days ; at the same time I found they were to take every thing in the house and make the best of them. I asked them how much they supposed the debt was, they told me about ten thousand pounds. I said I thought there would be more than enough to pay, without taking my cloaths. Whether there was or not, they said, they could not think of taking them, and hoped I was provided for ; indeed said I, I am not—they shook their heads, saying they were sorry for it. I went up stairs and brought down my diamonds, which Lord S— had given me, and my watch, and laid them on the table, telling them to order the servants to deliver up the keys, which, with much reluctance they did. I think I shall never forget how greatly affected the poor butler was ; he came to me with tears in his aged eyes, to know if he must part with them ; I told him yes, and that we must all provide ourselves with new places.

I found the officers had orders to stay in the house. I therefore told them I would quit it in a day or two. They desired me not to hurry myself. In the evening, I went out, and hired a lodging at half a guinea a week, up two pair of stairs, for I was not very nice.—Indeed I did not care where I was. When I came back again to my house, I found my woman crying as if she would break her heart, and intreating she might go with me—whatever situation I was in, she begged to attend me. I told her that was impossible; for I had taken a lodging for myself as a common tradesman's wife, and meant to take in plain work for a living. "No, " my Lady," said she, "that you shall never do, " for I will go with you, and go out to wash- " ing to maintain you." I smiled at the girl's simplicity, and thanked her for her good intention. "I thought," said she, "my master would bring " you to this, by his gaming so high; indeed my " Lady, he would make nothing of losing five or " six thousand pounds of an evening at the gaming " table." I begged she would not mention his name any more, but go and pack up my things, and let a porter carry them to my lodgings. I rang the bell for tea, and the gentleman in waiting came in. I saw he had been shedding tears; for he came with his handkerchief in his hand and his eyes red with weeping. For my own part, I confess I was too much confused to be much affected, and therefore was glad to get out of the house, that I might compose myself.

I asked leave of the officers to take some books, which was all I took; but I found myself considerably richer than I expected; for my woman had taken half a dozen table, and as many tea spoons, without my consent. I now began to think what I was to do; for I thought I would sooner starve than go to any of my friends or relations. I had only twenty pounds in cash, and my cloaths, which could

could not last me a great while. But I imagined I might possibly hear from Lord S— soon, and that made me somewhat easy. Next day I set off for my new lodgings ; and at the same time ordered the servants not to come, or let any one know where I was on any account, but if they wanted me at any time to send me a line.

I had the courage, just before I went, to order up my whole retinue, consisting of no less than thirty servants. When they were all assembled around me, I gave them the following exordium—
 “ You see in me the vanity of human greatness.
 “ Not four years have passed since Lord Smith
 “ Daval thought proper to introduce me to my
 “ late exalted station, in which I shined a pleasing
 “ object of magnificence and splendor ; envied by
 “ those much happier than myself, and admired
 “ for that, which I was not to enjoy.—Behold me
 “ now, even in person so much altered, that you
 “ can scarce know me ; but in my circumstances
 “ I am fallen indeed, far below your own ;—re-
 “ duced from the summit of grandeur to almost
 “ the lowest abyss of misery ;—to be the idle chat
 “ of the great, and the sport of the licentious
 “ proud—forsaken by my husband, and become
 “ even a reproach with those who ought to protect
 “ me. If you” (turning to Monsieur Pallairde, a
 French valet of Lord S—’s) “ should ever see your
 “ noble master, tell him, destitute as he left me,
 “ I shall pay this everlasting obligation to his me-
 “ mory, by confessing that no man on earth could
 “ have made me so happy as himself, had he but
 “ been blest with a competent share of prudence.—
 “ May the same insurmountable fortitude attend
 “ him through life, as I now experience in these
 “ trying scenes ; and may everlasting blessings
 “ crown him here, and hereafter. As to you, my
 “ servants, may you all enjoy health and comfort,
 “ and be received into such families, as are bet-

" ter suited to cultivate your morals, than while
" you were in this."

They were so affected by this speech, that they knew not whether to go or stay, till I pointed to the door, when they went out, with sorrowful looks, exclaiming, " God bless your Ladyship ;—
" may you be happy and richer than ever !"— Weak minds are seldom affected long with what does not concern themselves.—I heard one of them say, " She keeps up her dignity, however." I suppose they expected to see me in a fit of madness, tearing my hair,—wringing my hands, and abusing their master.—This would have been according to their own ideas of things ;—but it was not so with me ;—I had other feelings, and " that within which passed all shew."

I now arrived at my new habitation, by the name of Mrs. Smith. I went into my apartment, and the first object that struck me, was my own sweet face in the glass. I found I was not so frightful as I expected ; " however, thought I, as no one will know me, I can go out whenever I please, without the fear of being insulted by the prying eye of curiosity." With these thoughts I made myself happy.

One day after tea, the good woman of the house came up stairs and sat with me some time. She asked me if I had heard how Lord Smith Daval was gone off ; and left his Lady, having lost his whole fortune at the gaming table :—" This is the way," said she, " that people go on at this end of the town : I had much rather take a gentlewoman, like you, than these people who make such a figure."—" O," thought I, " this will do." My own woman coming up, she left me ; and when out of hearing, I told Ann (for she would come to attend me, what ever I would say to the contrary), she must take care not to call me by my real name. " No, my Lady," said she,

" Why

" Why you have forgot already ;—that is the very name which will discover me."

Looking over the letters which came for me while I lay ill of the small pox, I found one from Mrs. A—, informing me her father was dead ; and begged I would send her child down into the country. Through the multiplicity of my own affairs, I had, till then, quite forgot the poor babe. I asked Ann, if the woman who nursed it since I was ill, had been paid ? She told me she had ; and that Lord Smith Daval had sent it into the country, at the desire of the mother.

In the letter, were many thanks for my kindness to her, as it was the means, she said, of the happy reconciliation with her and her father, who had made a will to disinherit her, but had now set that aside, and made her equal with her sister ; concluding with saying, nothing could add so much to her happiness, as the pleasure of seeing me in the country. A thought struck me, and I wrote a letter to inform her I would accept of her invitation. I wrote this, not that I had any intentions of going, so much as trying her friendship, for I was certain Sir John R—'s family had heard of my misfortune by my servants, and consequently all the country by this time ; and as the wife's conduct is always called in question when the husband does wrong, I was sure that the ladies would blame me for going out so much, and dressing so fine ; in short, they would insinuate at last that I absolutely ruined him. This, indeed, is what we must always expect ; for a woman is never excused for any crime the husband commits, except it is that of murder ; nay even then her own sex will say she must be privy to it. Therefore I was determined not to go to any of my *female* friends ; for I never met with a woman yet in whom I could place the least confidence ; for in high life, they are the pinnacle of vanity, arrogance, and defamation ; in the middle station,

they

they are made up of envy, slander and ignorance; and delight in nothing more than the downfall of each other. From these sentiments you will suppose I am no friend to my own sex; but believe me, no one would do more to serve them than myself, when in my power.

But to return to Mrs. A—. In answer to my letter, she wrote me she was exceedingly sorry for my misfortune, and should have been glad to see me, but her house was repairing, and not fit to receive me, but never mentioned a word about the expence I had been at for her child's nursing, or the lodging of two guineas a week I had paid for her, and other expences which cost Lord S— above a hundred pounds the half year she was in town; besides the child's linen, which cost upwards of thirty pounds; however, her father was dead, and she was now her own mistress; and finding herself very rich, she supposed she should want no friendship from any body, therefore thought proper to decline taking me in, for fear, I suppose, I might stay longer than might be agreeable to her.

You may suppose from this, that I cannot value Mrs. A— for her nobleness of soul. Yet she is not without some good qualities; she is mild to a degree, and humble to a fault: but too mean an opinion of herself, and so great a command of her temper, that you will never see her in a passion, was you to remain with her seven years. But I must return to my own narrative.

About twelve o'clock I went to bed, but could sleep very little—my thoughts were so taken up with comparing my situation to what I was wont to enjoy. As I lay awake in the morning ruminating on my miserable situation, Ann came into my room, and very glad I was to see her. I got up, and while at breakfast, she told me Sir John R— called, and desired to have the honour

of

of seeing me. I told her I would not see him, for I supposed he would want me to go into the country with him, which I was determined I would not, nor be dependant upon the cold looks of my friends any more, for I knew that the girls were women grown by that time, and the eldest was always proud and haughty to a degree, and I should think they insulted me, whether they intended it or not.

I had given up all thoughts of seeing another happy day, and was therefore quite resigned to my fate. I thought when my cash and all things were gone I would go out to service; but I had not been long in this place, before my landlady told me I was the first person she had ever taken into her house without a character; not knowing what she meant, I found myself so much hurt at this speech, that I was determined to leave this lodging, and I accordingly told her so, and went and got another, but found myself worse off, and I believe I changed near twenty times, till at length my cloaths and every thing was gone. In this situation I found myself very ill from a fever I caught thro' my great uneasiness, and anxiety. Ann was very good to me; she came to see me every day, but finding I grew worse, she ran for a doctor, and who should she bring to me but the very same gentleman who attended me in the small pox.

When he came into the room, I thought I should have died:—he stood like a statue; but recovering himself, “Lady Smith Daval, said he, “is it possible you can be hid in such a place as “this!—I have made every enquiry after you at “Lord Smith Daval’s house, and every where “else, but all to no purpose.”

“Oh doctor,” said I, “who would wish to know “of such an unhappy wretch as I am? I have “taken every precaution I possibly could, that
“no

" no one should know where I was, and am
" really sorry you have been so unlucky as to
" find me."

" My good Lady, said he, you soon will be
" well ; and I hope to see you in a better situa-
" tion than this, before long." I shook my
head, which was all the answer I could give him.
He left me, and presently after sent me some medi-
cines which made me better.

I suppose Ann told him of my necessitous situa-
tion, for he ordered the people of the house to
take particular care of me, and gave Ann five
guineas for my use, and told her to take great care
of me. The doctor continued his visits altho' I
had recovered from my illness, and one day as I
was shaking with cold over a little bit of fire,
he came in. " Lady Smith Daval, said he, I
" know you are a woman of such fine feelings ;—
" so great sensibility and such penetration, that
" you have a very ill opinion of the world in
" general. You perhaps may think I may come,
" either out of mere curiosity, or with a view of
" taking advantage of your distressed situation :
" but if there be honour under Heaven, believe
" me, my dear Madam, I come entirely to serve
" you ; for, to see a person of your dignity, who
" once shone as bright as the morning star, now
" sunk into dire misfortune and distress, is a
" scene too shocking for any feeling heart. Even
" the Gods, continued he, behold you with com-
" passion, and you will, I hope, very soon rife
" again."

You see he was pretty well skilled in the lan-
guage which was most likely to find a way to a
woman's heart. I smiled at this ratiocination,
and asked him if the Gods had sent him as a
messenger of this good news to me. " Yes,"
said he ; " and as such my fortune and my interest
" are entirely at your service."

" Most

" Most noble doctor," said I, " these are words, which, to a woman in my situation might sound like a voice from Heaven : but to me they are like daggers to my afflicted heart ! " No, Sir—I have a soul which scorns to receive favours, when there was no possibility of returning them ; and to be dependant upon a stranger, is, to me, worse than death ; and since fate has placed me in this humble state, I had rather linger out a wretched life in poverty and want, than bear the insults of dependant obligations."

" Give me leave, Lady Smith Daval," said he, " since you have started this subject, to give you my sentiments upon it. I have always discovered in you, a greatness of mind, far above your sex, and too much exalted for me to express. With such sentiments, it is no wonder you thus look down upon every thing as beneath your notice : yet, I flatter myself I have a soul tho' far inferior to your own, would scorn a thought so mean, as that of laying you under the least obligation, for the greatest service I should render you : and believe me, my Lady, one half hour of your conversation, is more than a recompence for half my income ; and believe me, I am so attached to your interest, that I can never suffer you to live so much beneath your person and quality ;—therefore 'tis in vain to refuse me this one request I am going to make, which is, that I may procure you another lodging more suitable for you, and a servant to attend you."

" No, doctor," said I ; " the people are very civil to me where I am, and while they continue so I cannot think of moving ; but be assured I shall ever retain the warmest sense of your goodness of heart towards me." The woman of the house came up to ask me what I would

would like for dinner ; I gave her four pence and told her to get me a plate of beef.

The doctor now left me, and by his countenance, I saw he was very much hurt ; no doubt from the poorness of my meal, for soon after a waiter from one of the coffee houses brought me a chicken and several other things ready dressed.

When I was alone, I began to reason with myself what I should do, situated as I was. I had said every thing to the doctor I possibly could to withdraw his generous intentions towards me ; and had as good as told him I would rather starve than receive from him any favours ; therefore I could not tell what to attribute these favours to. I knew that Lord Smith never employed any but people of eminence in their profession, I had therefore no reason to doubt but he was a man of fortune. But, thought I, if he had a wife and family, what would they think of his conduct, if it should reach their ears, for I was certain no woman would have joined in a scheme so laudable. In short I did not know what to think or do ; and in this state of perplexity, the woman came to inform me there was a hamper of wine come for Lady Smith Daval, but was sure it was a wrong direction, for she knew no such person in her house. " No, no," said I, " make them take it back again. I am sure it is for no one here." Indeed I was very much provoked to think Doctor H— should be so much to blame as to expose my name. I wished only for money to pay my lodging, in order to leave the place, that he might not see me any more, unless I should have it in my power to pay him for his attendance.

Soon after the doctor came, and told the woman the wine was for me, and told her he should send dinner and supper every day ; and all other necessaries that were wanting. My landlady came running up stairs to tell me this, as she thought

thought good news, and was much more pleased with it than I was, for all I desired was just enough to support me in my situation, and should have been more happy, than at receiving favours in this manner, which made me very miserable.

For three weeks I saw nothing of Doctor H—. I lived well, and so did the woman of the house, for I eat but very little, and she had always what remained, for there was generally as much sent as would dine five or six people. I begged the waiter would not bring so much; but he told me Doctor H— insisted it should be brought.

One morning the doctor came in, and, with his usual politeness, enquired after my health. "Oh, doctor," said I, falling on my knees, "at your feet let me return you my sincere and hearty thanks for your unbounded generosity and goodness to a wretch so much unworthy of it." The poor doctor was unable to reply, but raised me up, and led me to a chair, and walked several times across the room; when recovering himself he thus addressed me, "Believe me, Lady Smith Daval, the reason I have not done myself the pleasure of calling upon you before, was the dread of this humiliation from such sublime feelings as yours; but be assured if you will permit me the honour of calling upon you, I shall esteem it the happiest part of my life; but if you are so severe as to deny me that satisfaction, and thus continue so overpowered with grief; on my bended knees I swear, that if my personal attendance is the cause of your distress, I will forbear, but my service I will never withdraw." He paused—however I had the courage to ask him if he was married; he answered me in the affirmative. "Then doctor," said I, "you have it in your power to make me esteem you as one of the most exalted characters that exists."

" Command me, Lady S—," said he, " I will comply with it be what it may."

" Then," said I, " from this time you must never think of calling upon me, without I send for you, as a favour done to me in justice to your wife." He looked disconcerted at my request, but said—" Believe me, Lady S—, I have not been so ignorant in my choice of a wife, as to think she would call me to account for doing what I thought proper; besides, she knows and approves of the whole affair; and she wishes to see you; but I did not dare to tell you this before." He told me this with so good a grace that I believed every word of it.

When he left me, I thus reasoned with myself. " Doctor H— is a married man, and his wife is agreeable to his visits to me as he has told her my distressed situation. Oh, if my dear Lord had found out an object of such charity, I should have adored her generous soul; but where is there another woman who thinks like myself, or could do as I do; besides as I never met with one who had the least feeling for their own sex, I cannot but think the doctor has deceived me, for his wife does not know how bountiful he is to me."

While I was thus musing, Ann came into my room and told me she had got a place for me in Hanover-square, near Doctor H—'s. This led me to ask her if she knew his wife, she said she had seen her, and had heard the coachman say, the doctor would be a very good sort of a man, if she would let him; but tho' he is worth more than a hundred thousand pounds, she grudges the servants victuals. I asked her if she knew whether his wife had a large fortune; she said she dare say she had, or the doctor never would have had her, for she is a strange woman. I was a little curious to know more of this matter, and therefore

therefore determined, when the doctor came again, to find him upon it, and to put an end to his visits : for I found if his wife knew of his real bounty to me, she would not be very much pleased.

To prevent my maid's curiosity, I told her I had found a friend, but knew not who it was ; and therefore wanted for nothing. The poor girl seemed quite delighted. " Oh dear Ma'am," said she, " it must be Lord S—, and you will see " him again." I shook my head, but gave her no answer ; for tho' I thought her very faithful in not letting Sir John R— know where I was, yet I could not trust her in this affair. When she was going, she told me she should often call, and let me know how Sir John's family did. I desired her to be particular in knowing how my mother did, and how she bore my loss. Yet I knew when she had once sat down to cards, she would never break her heart about any thing.

In the evening, Doctor H— came again. " For " Heaven's sake, Lady Smith, no tragedy to " day," said he, " for I have not half recovered " the last."

" No, Doctor," said I, " you shall have some- " thing to day by way of preface to the next."

" Not a word of that, my Lady," said he ;— " really Lady S— you are a charming actress."

" Yes," thought I, " and so are you."

He sat down, and we talked upon various subjects, and I was soon convinced he was a man of great learning, good sense, and sound judgment ; and endowed with uncommon penetration, which altogether added such spirits to the conversation, as quite charmed me ; he indeed appeared quite amiable in my sight ; but these thoughts were rather alarming to me, when I considered how much I was in the power of the man who had been so bountiful to me. This quite distressed me ; and supper coming in, I found he meant to

stay ; and had ordered another waiter to attend. I sat down, but was in so much confusion I could scarce contain myself ; for I knew the servants would put the worst construction upon it. As soon as they left the room, I thus addressed the doctor.

“ Sir, since you and your bountiful Lady have thought proper to confer upon me so great a blessing as to support me as a real object worthy your charity ; I mean to do myself the honour of waiting upon your Lady to-morrow morning, to return her my most grateful thanks.”

Now thought I, you will be obliged to speak truth, for I believe he never was at a greater loss for an excuse ; however the Doctor was one of those whose wit never sleeps, for he presently recollect ed himself ; “ Lady Smith Daval,” said he, “ do you suppose, that after I had seen your all-gracious knees bending to me, who am unworthy, even of your presence ; do you suppose me that unfeeling wretch, who would suffer you to return thanks to my wife ? No, was she a princess, or an empress of the world, you should not do it.”

“ Indeed, doctor,” said I, “ this is a most gracious speech of yours, but it does not afford that satisfaction I could wish ; for I am doubtful whether your lady is a stranger to your bounty and visits to me ; therefore you cannot oblige me more than by telling me the truth.”

“ You must excuse and pardon me, Lady Smith, for a fault, which resulted from your own nice delicacy ; for had I not told you that Mrs. H— was acquainted with my intentions towards your happiness, I was certain you would have defeated my designs, by telling me you would not receive the least favour from me, without I would promise not to visit you again ; at that time I might have been ridiculous enough to

“ have

" have complied with such a request ; but be assured Lady S—, no man will ever do that after he has been honoured with but a few hours of your conversation."

At this elaborate speech I put on a very grave face, and told him, that if those were his real sentiments, I would take care, in future, and not make it so agreeable ;—and was sorry my conduct should, at any time, have led him to suppose that I would receive the visits of a man, who declared his wife was a stranger to our acquaintance.

He replied to this, " suppose, Lady S—, a man of a large fortune, married to a woman possessed of such illiberal ideas, that she was not capable of doing a good action herself, or suffer him if she knew it : would you think that man to blame, who performs a good one in private ?"

" No, Doctor," I replied ; " but at the same time I should not like to be the object of that man's bounty ; for how unhappy would that poor woman be that knew it."

" You are too sensible Lady S—," replied he, " to suppose, such a person deserved your pity ; and who can make life comfortable, with a woman who is so seldom in her senses."

I found he was hurt at repeating these words, therefore to change the subject, I asked him how time went ;—he said, very fast, but did not tell me what o'clock it was ; I was obliged to tell him it was late ; he then made an apology, and was going, when I told him I had something of moment to relate ; he sat down, and I continued, " believe me Doctor H—, no one can be more sensible of the obligations under which they labour, than myself ; yet, did my life depend upon it, as much as my subsistence, I cannot be happy, without you will forbear visiting me."

" Lady Smith Daval," said he, " have you any design upon me ; or do you suppose I have upon

" upon you? As to your person, I shall ever
 " hold it sacred; and be assured, I would forfeit
 " my life, rather than mention a subject to you
 " that was not fit for angels to hear. Indeed
 " Lady S— your notions of things are so refined
 " that I appear above this world when discoursing
 " with you, therefore allow me that happiness, I
 " ask no more. Why would you wish, bright
 " ornament of your sex, to be so secluded from
 " the world, in the bloom of life, as to withdraw
 " from society your enchanting wit: tell
 " me, most exalted woman, why you would be
 " guilty of doing such violence to yourself?
 " you cannot do it out of the mere notions of
 " what the world might think of your conduct.
 " Suppose all your friends and mine too, knew of
 " my visits to you? they are all far beneath your
 " notice: and for a woman of your sense to hesitate
 " a moment—without you doubt my honour,
 " which I have ever held sacred, and which I
 " hope is as insurmountable as your Ladyship's
 " merit." Without waiting for an answer, he
 wished me good night; and indeed I was not
 sorry, for I wished him gone.

I sat down, and began to ruminate on what I should do. I found it impossible to avoid receiving his visits; and his rhetoric was too overbearing for me to dispute the point with him. This, added to his bounty, I thought might make me give way to his arguments, without my being convinced of the justness of them. However I had no reason to repent of my behaviour to him; for my trusty servant Ann, came a few days after, with a piece of news which entirely set me free from obligations to any one. She came into my room without any manner of ceremony, quite out of breath with running.—
 " Oh, ma'am, you have got all the world left
 " you; and Sir John R— is just crazed to find
 " you; for your uncle in Jamaica is dead." Now
 I knew

I knew if he had no family I must be his heir ; and I never heard he was ever married. I was afraid I should appear too elated at this news ; I therefore told her she might tell Sir John's servant, that if he brought a letter to her for me, she could convey it to me. Next day she brought a letter, which informed me my uncle was dead, and that he had made a will, wherein he left his brother's eldest daughter, twenty thousand pounds ; so that if there were ever so many claimants I should have had his fortune. In this letter, Sir John wished to know where to find me, concluding with a great many compliments at this unexpected change of fortune.

Soon after I had finished my letter, in came Doctor H—, who found me quite a different being than when last he left me. I was now in no fear of the poor Doctor, nor his wife, nor any one else. I told him I should soon be the happiest woman in the world ; by having it in my power to make every acknowledgment to those who had been friends to me in my distress. The Doctor gave me joy ; and said many fine things upon the occasion, and concluded with saying, “ May that divine woman, ‘Lady Smith Daval, never forget her doctor.’” “I hope she will never forget her friends,” I replied ; “but be assured, Doctor, you will never see me on my knees again, without it be at ‘prayers.’” He could not forbear laughing. “Indeed, Lady Smith, if you knew how elegant ‘you look in that posture, you would often pray.’” I asked him if he would oblige me with fifty pounds. “A thousand, Madam,” said he, with pleasure.” I told him fifty would be quite enough. “There, ‘Lady S—’ said he, presenting that sum to me. “If you should want more, you know you may ‘command me ;”—and took his leave. I then set about preparing myself to meet Sir John R—, and accordingly took fresh lodgings in Leicester fields,
at

at three guineas a week ; for I was determined never to let him know how distressed I had been. It was near a week before I was in condition to receive Sir John. I then sent him a note, desiring to see him at three o'clock. Accordingly he came ; but whether it was from my being so much altered by the small pox, or from not seeing me so long, I know not ; for he appeared greatly confused, and was some time before he could say " I am happy " to see you, Lady Smith Daval.

" Indeed, Sir John, so am I to see you ; as you may suppose from the circumstance that sent you to me."

" Yes, Madam," said he, " I have no other reason to believe my presence could have been so acceptable to your Ladyship, after I had so much desired to see you, but was always refused ; and could never be happy enough to meet you to know what part of my conduct has merited such treatment from you ?"

" Why, indeed, Sir John, you have never deserved such treatment from me ; but you know my spirit is too high to bear cold and significant looks ; and be obliged to acquiesce with those from whom I am obliged to accept a piece of bread, and to say as they say, however repugnant to my own ideas.—No, Sir ; I love liberty ; I would rather starve than be humbled into such a submiffion !"

" Well, Lady Smith," said he, " it is now in your own power to secure yourself from every obligation, and to reign as independant as you please. But where is Lord S— all this time ?"

Indeed this struck me most sensibly ; for as I had heard nothing of him since he had left me, I had made up my mind upon not seeing him any more ; and therefore told Sir John I did not know, as he never had informed me of his going ; but that I had heard he was in France.

" Not

" Not know he was going to leave you !" said he ; " but I hope he provided for you ? "

" No," said I, " he did not ; and no one living knows what I have suffered since he left me." I then related to him all my sufferings. He was greatly affected at my story, and told me he had taken all the pains possible to find me, for he had heard I was in great distress.

Sir John then told me my uncle's property was in England, and had been these eight months ; he then gave me draughts upon his banker for four thousand pounds ; and leaving me, I began to consider how I should conduct myself in this strange turn of fortune : for though my uncle left me very handsome, yet, without some share of prudence to manage it, I might soon involve myself in difficulties, if I attempted to live in the stile I was used to when with Lord S—. To avoid that, I was resolved to leave town, and therefore got Sir John R— to purchase a genteel house for me in the country ; for by that means I should have the great happiness of again seeing my relations, especially as I now wanted nothing of them. Besides, I knew it would mortify them to see me again in an independant situation. The first of them that would be most mortified, was Mrs. A—. Thought I, I will now see if the house is repaired. It was almost three years since I had heard from her, and believe me I was much elated at the thoughts of telling her how I despised her meanness of soul : and I was sure she had sense enough to be ashamed of her ingratitude, though not heart enough to get the better of it.

The next day, Sir John R— came, and I desired him not to let any of his family, nor any one else, know my intentions : nor did he ; for he bought me this house, and furnished it ready to receive me, without my mother or Lady R—'s knowing who it was for. I provided myself with a new carriage, and

and every thing necessary for a person of small fortune.

The day now arrived when my affairs were to be entirely settled ; and Sir John, Doctor H—, my uncle's executor, the attorneys, and other attendants, came to settle the business ; which was soon done, for the deeds were all ready to sign ; and in looking over the writings, I found there was five hundred pounds to be divided between Sir John R— and the other executor, (a merchant of Jamaica, who came over to see the business compleated.) When every thing was settled, and every expence paid, I found myself posseffed of twenty thousand, four hundred pounds ; which I thought quite enough to keep me in the manner I wished. On this day I provided an elegant dinner for my company ; and once more sat down at the head of the table like myself. They broke up at nine ; and Sir John said he hoped I should be a good neighbour. " Yes, Sir John," said I, " and I dare say the ladies will be glad to see me."

" As to the ladies," said he, " I cannot say ; " I can only answer for myself ; and believe me, " I shall always be very happy to see you." And indeed I often have his company, for he really is an excellent companion.

In about three months I received a letter from Sir John, informing me that every thing was ready for my reception. I accordingly took Ann with me and set off, and called at B— Hall, where I found Mrs. A— " Pray, Madam," says I, " is the house finished yet ?" This question quite confounded her ; for she looked as stupid as possible, and knew not how to anfwer me. I could not forbear laughing in her face. At length, however, she recovered herself—" Dear Lady Smith Daval," said she, " who would have thought of seeing you ? I am sure I am glad to see you, and heartily give you joy of your good fortune."

" Dear

" Dear Mrs. A—" said I, " you need not affect a sincerity which I know your heart is an entire stranger to ; nor can I believe it possible for you to rejoice so much in my prosperity, who not long ago denied me your house, for fear my distressed situation should make me stay longer with you than might be agreeable. I could not come so near B— Hall without calling to tell you my sentiments, and also what an unfeeling, ungrateful heart you have. But perhaps you may not think so ? There was a time, Madam, when you thought I was deserving a favour from you ; this you cannot but acknowledge."

" Why no," said she, trembling, " I cannot deny that, Lady Smith."

" And pray," said I, " what did I do to erase that thought from your breast ?"

" Nothing," replied she. " You indeed was the best friend I ever found, and the only one ; and though I could not receive you, at the time you sent, I wrote a letter to inform you when it did suit me ; but I received no answer to it."

" People seldom," said I, " answer letters they do not receive ;" and she fell a crying for she found herself hurt at what I had said to her. I told her she need not now be afraid to ask me in, for I wanted no favour ; I asked her how her child did ; she told me very well, and that she was married to a Mr. Edwards ; I was much surprized at this. She asked me to stay dinner ; I told her I could not, and took my leave without asking her to call on me.

The next day Sir John R— called upon me, I asked him how Mrs. A— came not to marry the young man she had the child by ?—he said he did not know, but that the poor fellow took his disappointment so much at heart, that he died soon after ; she sent him eight hundred pounds ; and a letter to inform him never to see her more ; and soon after this she married Mr. Edwards, which

soon

soon put an end to her lover.—Sir John also told me that her father had been dead some time.

A few days after, my mother and Lady R— paid me a visit, for the first time since I had been in the country. My mother had not seen me since I had the small pox, and when she first saw me expressed great concern that it had so much disfigured me, telling me it would have been better if it had taken me off, than left me such a fright. I smiled at her weakness, but gave her no answer—to change the discourse, Lady R— asked me how I liked the house, and other indifferent questions. I never told her Ladyship, or my mother, my history, nor indeed to any but Sir John. I found they were all very much against Mrs. A— for her ill conduct, but I soon prevailed upon them to forgive her, and now we all visit her. Sir John's eldest daughter is going to marry Sir H. P—. She is a fine young lady, but much like my aunt, for she has a great deal of pride:—I love to humble the girl, and very often do, or there would be no bearing with her.

Now I have given you the particulars of my history just as it occurred to me; and do you think I have any obligation to Mrs. A— to place a confidence in her who had treated me so ungratefully. I did not behave so to the good Doctor H—. No, no; I have a grateful heart, and therefore could not slight the man, who had done so much to serve me, tho' unsolicited by me; I believe there are few—nay, there is no spark which can harbour in the human breast, or in other words, that so degrades humanity as *ingratitude*. I often think of those beautiful similes of the immortal Shakespeare.

Blow, blow, thou winter's wind,
Thou art not so unkind

As man's ingratitude;
Thy tooth is not so keen,
Because thou art not seen,

Altbo' thy breath be rude.

Freeze,

Freeze, freeze, thou bitter sky,
That dost not bite so nigh

As benefits forgot :

Though thou the waters warp,
Thy sting is not so sharp

As friend remember'd not.

But to return to the doctor. I did not leave him without taking a proper leave ; and we always spend many agreeable hours together when I go to town ; for his company and conversation is, to me, the most desireable thing on earth ; this indeed was one grand reason for my residing in the country ; for I was fearful it might grow *too* charming. I believe, if I was certain Lord Smith Daval was dead, I should never marry again. For notwithstanding Lord S— would not be said to be the man of my choice, but caught by the brilliant appearance he made ; yet, his manners were so exquisite, and his delicacy towards me, left such an impression on my mind, that can never be erased. And was he to come again, I should receive him with raptures ; for believe me, there is not any woman of common understanding, but would find herself strongly attached to the man she married, even if it should be a marriage of indifference, provided he treated her with a proper respect. But 'tis no wonder the women grow false, if the men cease to be kind. And now, Miss Catlane, I think you must certainly be tired with this narration : however imperfect I may have related this my history, for it is un-studied, and unadorned with high flowered rhetoric, it may serve as a means of improving your mind ; for young people, in general, are too apt to be led away by false appearances of things, which strikes their young imaginations, for want of experience in the world ; for we all of us see through a depraved understanding ; but see thro' few things as they really are.

LETTER XX.

YOUNG MILDMAN TO MISS CATLANE.

I Congratulate you on your happy allusion, nor am I displeased at the simplicity of the country man ; tho' by the by, you seem to set him down a companion for me ; and so indeed I am, in respect to your ambiguous way of arguing ; yet, I give you credit for the story of the poor man ; and am ready to believe that it is hard and difficult to account for the various accidents that attend mankind in their voyage thro' life. Happiness in this, as well as in a future life, depends in a great measure, upon our own conduct, in regulating our passions, to such objects, as are most conducive to the improving our morals, enlivening our understanding, and inspiring us with affections, which can, in no wise, fall short of that felicity which we aspire to.

I expect to hear you have established a new kind of doctrine, to disannul most of the old, formal, and illiberal ones, which have been handed down to us by our forefathers, that we might pursue the ways of morality. The name of this new system shall be " Liberty and mercy, founded by the celebrated Miss Catlane, a lover of the feet of sceptics." However, I make no doubt but time and experience will alter your opinion.— And may you be happy here, as you can wish ; and arrive hereafter, at that summit of glory, where your fertile imagination may improve to all eternity, is the wish of him who has the honour to be, Madam, your devoted humble servant,

JOHN MILDMAN.

LETTER

LETTER XXI.

MRS. FRIENDLY TO MISS CATLANE.

I Return you many thanks for Lady Smith's history—and confess I was highly delighted and entertained with it. I do not wonder at her exclaiming so much against our sex, as she has throughout the whole narrative; for in all her distresses she had not one female friend, and the insincerity which she met with from all those who were bound by the ties of blood, was enough to make her condemn the whole. From our earliest youth we are more accustomed to this kind of vice, than the men, which sinks us so low in their eyes—for, whenever we shew any artful device, our little vanities are flattered by the plaudits of our parents who call it *wit*, or a particular genius in us; and if a lye is told, why it is directly construed into a particular quickness and readiness of answering questions. Now was I a mother of children, I would give them a severer correction for a falsehood, than for a theft; for, from that alone, insincerity and depravity of morals, spring; and being brought up in having our natural vanities flattered, we become a kind of play thing for our infatuated parents: instead of being brought up in the paths of truth and the moral virtues, we are taught to strut about in pride, in the empty shew and parade of fashion. No wonder then, from having such idle notions instilled into our heads, we become insensible, and as it were callous to the voice of humanity, and the common feelings of nature!

I must tell you, dear Catlane, that I fear you will be obliged to come home to settle some bus-

siness, which, I am informed, cannot be done without you ; and Mrs. Catlane talks of coming for you soon ; however I hope you will not be obliged to stay with her, for she is more unhappy than ever, and will not suffer your sister even to visit me ; therefore I am sure you will not bear such confinement, especially after having such a pleasant situation. I hope, therefore, Mrs. C— will alter her mind, and suffer you to enjoy life while you have it in your power. And believe me, you shall not want a friend in

E. FRIENDLY.

LETTER XXII.

MISS CATLANE TO MISS SUKEY.

IT is impossible, my dear sister, to express the happiness and pleasure I have had in my visit to Lady Smith Daval ; I staid with her till Mrs. A— came for me, yet I wish she had kept away. When I got home, she asked me how I spent my time with Lady S—. " Most agreeably, Madam," said I, " 'tis impossible to do otherwise with such a bewitching woman ; she cannot but command respect from all ranks of people." " I know but one fault she has," replied Mrs. A—, " and that is her insuperable arrogance ; which all her misfortunes could not humble, nor can time deface."

" Upon my word, Madam," said I, " I do not see that error in Lady Smith, in the least ; for in my opinion, she has no more pride, than what is consistent with her merit ; and as to her

" her wit, it hides every imperfection she may
" have."

" I find," replied Mrs. A, " you are charmed
" with, and become a great advocate for her Lady-
" ship? indeed she was always famed for doing
" all the good she possibly could; and there is
" the greatest dependence upon her word; if she
" had fifty thousand a year, she would not lay
" by a shilling, or spend one more than her in-
" come, and so benevolent is she to the distressed
" that the whole parish lives by her bounty;
" therefore it is no wonder the place resounds
" so much in her praise. But, Miss Catlane, I
" never heard her say what became of Lord S.—
" I suppose he is dead?" I did not think proper
to tell her what Lady S— had communicated to
me about that.

You see Mrs. A— allows Lady S— all the
merit due to her person and firm understanding,
but like a true woman, she could not help throw-
ing in some blemishes to make, if possible, the
character less conspicuous: yet I cannot but con-
fess Mrs. A— has many good qualities, and
therefore persuade myself she is still that amiable
woman I ever thought her, until I find her other-
wife.

I have sent Mrs. Friendly Lady Smith's history,
which I hope will entertain you, and remain
your's affectionately,

S. CATLANE.

LETTER XXIII.

MISS CATLANE TO YOUNG MILDMAN.

YOUR last found me at B— Hall ; but where your next may find me I know not. Since I wrote you last I have been a week upon a visit to Lady Smith Daval. Oh Heaven ! what a charming woman she is—and was the greatest master of eloquence to say every thing in her praise, that the force of language can picture to the most fertile imagination, he will fall far, very far short of her real and indescribable perfections.

But in answser to your letter : you say “ various “ are the ways by which we seek misfortunes, “ and some people seek it as a real good.” This is an uncharitable way of thinking, for I believe it to be rather a misfortune incident to mankind, than a voluntary art to do wrong ; for the same object has not the same appearance in different dispositions. For instance, I take the greatest pleasure in courting every kind of innocent pleasure, and if I was to be debarred that enjoyment, I could not possibly exist ; and to live without the power of doing good or evil, would be worse to me than a state of annihilation. You look upon pleasures of all kind with an eye of contempt ; and according to your philosophical way of reasoning, a life of pleasure is the harbinger of vice ; and to save your money as well as your soul, choose to live as if you had neither. For my part, I am not of that ungenerous disposition as to suppose every body wrong who does not coincide with my sentiments ; I have too liberal an idea of people in general, and therefore can never be guarded against that vile dissimulation which makes its appearance under the sacred name of friendship.

It

It gives me much pleasure to find your passions are regulated to such objects as are calculated to improve your morals, enlighten your understanding, and inspire you with affections. Now Sir, I confess you must be born again, before such a change can be made ; and I always considered you as happy enough to be born without passions, and therefore found it no difficult matter to act according to the dictates of nature. But why do you believe a woman more doubtful, in respect to works, than man ? It plainly appears that you look upon us as too ignorant to distinguish good from evil.

You seem to be very smart upon the new kind of doctrine, which you style "liberty and mercy." Why the very name will draw a strong party. And suppose you ask Shamgrace to be my chaplain I mean the women to come veiled ; as to the men, I think, to keep up good order and decorum, we had better take no *male* creature into our society, and then there will be but little fear of keeping our ideas confined within the bounds of morality ; and I make no doubt but we shall be as famous for piety and good works as any of the proud pharisees ; who, in thinking themselves more holy than others, are in reality but emblems of the hypocrite ; for they are destroyers of pure religion, a pest to society, strangers to humanity, enemies to benevolence, and hate the very name of justice, which is all the perfection we can arrive at in this world.

You must excuse me, Sir ; for it is the essence of good manners to do every thing with freedom ; therefore I shall always give you my sentiments at large, to make what use of them you think proper.

I remain your's sincerely,

S. CATLANE.

LETTER

LETTER XXIV.

MISS CATLANE TO MRS A—

BEING taken from you, in a manner, by force, I had but little time to return you my most sincere thanks for the many favours you have conferred upon me ; and the great obligations which I lie under for your kindness shall never be forgotten. Nothing can make my life supportable, but the thoughts of returning to B— Hall.

What a wretched situation is this for me and my dear sister ! No variety—no amusements—but one continued scene of discontent ; and not a soul to converse with, nor any thing to make the heavy hours glide sportively along. Where is my horse ? I would give kingdoms, if I had them, for one to carry me back to B— Hall. Oh, my dear madam ! it is impossible to describe my feelings on entering this village ; on looking on the place where my fathers were wont to live in the greatest splendor ; and what adds to my misery, I seem to be born with the same notions and taste for high life as they, who were so much better able to support that dignity ; for their income at that time was four thousand pounds per annum, and now I am confined to but as many poor hundreds ! Tell me, then, dear Mrs. A—, how I am to subdue this latent propensity which harbours in my breast ; for indeed I am unable, myself, to conquer this passion : for what is life, without the real enjoyments of it ? I had rather earn my bread by servitude, than live in a stile any ways inferior to the rest of my family ; for then my dear mother could not tell me I was so much like my father ; for she tells me I would give away my gown to those who would ask me for

for it, and go without one myself; and a thousand other reflections, which I think I do not deserve.

I know not what Lady Smith will think of my going without taking my leave of her; but you can inform her of the impossibility of my doing it.

What a strange effect has different situations in life, over the same mind! When with you, I was a stranger to all those little, peevish, envious emotions, which are but too apt to rise in the minds of girls, at their first introduction into the world; particularly to those who are placed in a line above them. I often think of what you used to tell me; that there is a kind of instinct in my disposition, not to be accounted for; and though ambition seems displayed through every vein, yet, I could do violence to myself, and become the humblest creature living. But I find, that contradiction, ill-nature, and discontent, when too much exercised over me, makes me not only unruly, but almost forget my nature and act the savage; and I am sure this kind of treatment will never make me grow humble; nor will I fall so near a level with the brute creation, as to be frightened into submission and obedience by such discipline; for those who are not encouraged to do right, will much oftener do wrong, more out of perverseness than ill nature. May that never be the case of her, who has the honor of being,

Your ever obliged humble servant,

S. CATLANE.

LETTER

LETTER XXV.

MISS CATLANE TO LADY SMITH DAVAL.

NOTHING but the great confidence I have of your Ladyship's goodness, could have induced me to take a liberty, which otherwise might appear presumption. But as I was obliged to leave B— Hall without taking leave of any of my friends, I flatter myself you will pardon this freedom, which is to inform you the real cause of my sudden departure.

Mrs. Catlane having some business of moment, which could not be settled without my presence, her attorney advised her to send for me: but without giving me any notice of her intentions, she came herself for me, and would not allow me time to take leave of any one; however, she has promised Mr. A— that I shall return in a few weeks. This promise has made me somewhat easy; but indeed I am very unhappy; for there is so great a difference between the disposition of my mother and my deceased father, that till I went to B— Hall, I seldom knew what it was to pass a day without some dispute or other upon the most trivial affair; and this kind of treatment, from one who is ever most dear to me, does, in a great measure, deprive me of every comfort, by exposing herself and the family to the servants; which, to me, is dreadful. This was my sole reason for coming to B— Hall; and the great care and attention which I received from Mrs. A— while under her roof, will ever be remembered by me with the most heartfelt gratitude.

I have had the pleasure of seeing Mrs. A—'s son; he is really a fine young man; but Mrs. A— did not seem so glad to see him as Mr. A— was, for he

He took much more notice of him than she, who is his own mother. But when we consider every thing, we need not wonder at that shyness of Mrs. A— towards him, for I find the servants are acquainted with the whole affair concerning young B—; and Mrs. A—'s maid told me one morning as I was dressing, that he was a chance child, and one that ought not to have been (to use her own expression). I appeared surprised; and the girl, who, I believe has a very great regard for her mistress, was more tender upon the subject, than I could have expected from one of her class. She said, that though her mistress had been so unfortunate in having so cruel a father, yet Providence had rewarded her with two of the best of husbands; and that neither of them ever mentioned her son, but with the highest esteem. Indeed, Lady S—, I think she has been very lucky in her choice. But what man could use a woman ill, whose whole study is to please him; he must indeed be more than brute not to return it with kindness. Oh, that I might for ever dwell in a family that is thus really united!—Dispositions blended thus to please, are Heaven's vicegerents, and act a part which angels might take delight in!

I am, dear Lady S—,

Your obedient servant,

S. CATLANE.

LETTER

LETTER XXVI.

YOUNG MILDMAN, TO MISS CATLANE.

I can scarcely believe it possible for a lady, endued with such a share of vivacity and understanding as you are, to be so much chagrined as you seem, at a circumstance, which will rather add happiness than deprive you of any ; for as your stay at P— Hall will be but short, you will feel the full force of enjoyment when you return to that dear enchanting village. The sorrows we have here, are but very trifling when compared to the joys which are to come. This ought to encourage that degree of fortitude which I ever thought you mistress of. I have often heard you say, that hope is the aid to all happiness ; and that despair was but a phantom, an inhabitant only of weak minds. — Why then do you compare the disappointment of a few days pleasure, to the endless torments of another world ? yet I do not much wonder at it from one who is so susceptible of those transporting passions ; therefore if you do not subdue, and endeavour to bring to subjection, that immoderate desire you have after pleasure, the wishing in vain will be your punishment ; for the mind that is ever hankering after those transient joys, without the hopes of obtaining them ; must be miserable indeed.

It seems to be my misfortune, to be too severe upon the unthinking part of mankind ; but it is more out of pity, than from any other motive ; therefore you must excuse an error of this kind. Yet I cannot fall in-with your sentiments, in respect to imputing our own misguided conduct, to any predestinated or unavoidable fate, which attends a being, which is indued with sense and reason.

I grant

I grant that the same objects have very different effects upon different minds ; yet, my dear Madam, good and evil is the same thing to all ; and we cannot do wrong without knowing it :—for instance, ask a man who is a general swearer, if he thinks it right, and he will tell you, no ; but it is a habit, and he cannot help it ; yet in company, where it is looked upon as a mark of ill breeding, he can affect being ashamed of it ; therefore it must be an unnatural vice, for no man was ever able to explain any particular gratification in it.

I find you have a very high opinion of my generosity. Now I look upon money to be the same thing to the body, that religion is to the soul—its grand support, and there is no being happy here without it, which makes me more frugal than otherwise I should be. But notwithstanding this narrowness of mind, I would rather be the basest villain that ever crawled on earth, than a false friend :—but I find myself hurt at the bare idea of being suspected.

I hope by this time, you are convinced that I have passions, and that it is in your power to raise them, and yours only ; for when you have a mind to please, your words are all enchantment ; but when to plague, they are daggers, sharpened with such keen reproach, that pierce the very soul ; and like a venomous dart, if it does but pierce the skin, it leaves it incurable. But I hope he will not experience the latter, who has the honour to be

Your obedient servant,

J. MILDMAN.

LETTER XXVII.

LADY SMITH DAVAL TO MISS CATLANE.

YOUR sudden flight had occasioned much concern in this neighbourhood, and Sir John R— called upon me yesterday, to know the cause of your leaving us so unexpectedly.

I admire your sentiments in respect to Mrs. A—, for nothing betrays so much meanness of spirit, as the finding fault with any one person, merely out of compliment to another. Now to avoid this, you have found out those good qualities in Mrs. A— which my prejudice against her, would, perhaps, never let me.—However I believe no person would take more care of a young lady than Mrs. A—, and I believe she has made proper atonement for her past conduct, except that of ingratitude; but that is a composition in her nature which can never be erased; therefore I cannot tell whether Providence in his all-wise directions, sent Mrs. A— those good husbands to reward her for her past conduct;—no, Catlane, good husbands, like the sun, fall to the share of the just and the unjust. You may think me too satirical; but this does not allude to any particular person; for I dare say Mrs. A— will meet with every respect from her present husband, he can possibly pay to her.

I wish to see you soon at B— Hall again; for as Mrs. C— and you seem so diametrically opposite in temper, it must be very unpleasant to confine you to a place so disagreeable; for in my opinion, nothing can so distort the genius, and spoil the morals of the young people more, than the tyrannical discipline which some parents exercise over their

their children, which lays them open to every kind of error incident to their weak frame; and what is worse, the finer their intellects, the more capable are they of receiving injuries; whereas an insensible mind grows callous from nature and custom; and not feeling so forcibly the abuses they receive, tamely submits to the slavish yoke, without the spirit to resent them.

I cannot but reflect with pity on the many disadvantages your unfortunate situation may plunge you into; therefore I should be extremely happy to snatch you from such an impending danger. If you find it impracticable to come at present, I would wish you to adhere to this one admonition; that is, not to communicate your unhappy discord with Mrs. C—, to any of your acquaintance, particularly those who are any ways beneath you; for tho' they will seem to commiserate you in your misfortune to your face, depend upon it they will condemn you in their hearts; and those who are happy in their own family, have but little feeling for the anarchies in others. All open dispositions generally suffer great inconveniences from the confidence they place in those who seem to sympathize with them in their distress; and their own hearts being then melted into softness, too easily receives the impression of that baneful delusion, false pity, which so often appears in our sex. But do not think I mean to insinuate a dislike for the ladies, by way of preference to the other sex; indeed it is not my intention to instill such destructive notions into your mind; for the very reason which makes one sex despicable, and the other not to be trusted, is the want of a refined understanding; for there is a spurious kind of wit, which shews itself in various pleasing forms, that has no communication with good sense; and three parts out of four of the men who are represented to us as men of wit and genius, when

they come to be minutely examined, are found to be but the bare shadow of it. It is no wonder, then, that instead of getting a sociable, improving companion, we fall into the hands of those counterfeits.

Thus it is that so few people are happy in the marriage state. The man grows dull and insensible, for want of vivacity and good-nature to keep up his spirits ; while the woman grows fantastical and ridiculous in being stored with too much ; and this very couple, which, before marriage, seemed so pleasing to each other ; now find, alas ! nothing but disappointment and contradiction, for want of a few grains of that intrinsic commodity, good sense, to enliven and improve their conversation ; for want of which, wedlock drags on in such an insipid state, that we grow weary of it, because we have not wit or sense enough to enjoy it.

My dear Catlane, I have given you-a few hints respecting the world in general, and hope you will be able to make such a choice, as may ever redound to your happiness ; this is the sincere wish of

Your ever respectful friend,

E. SMITH DAVAL.

LETTER XXVIII.

MRS. A— TO MISS CATLANE.

I AM sorry you are so unhappy at P— Hall ; yet I wish you could be more reconciled to Mrs. C—, for I am sure it would be a means of making life more agreeable to both ; and it is an indispensable duty on your part, and of love and

and regard on her's; and I cannot but think she is very fond of you: but there are those kind of beings, of such strange dispositions, that they cannot bear to see any body happier than themselves. She told me you was one of the best tempers in the world, and the whole reason of her disagreeing with you was the propensity you had for pleasure, which, she said, was attended with great expence; and therefore wished, if possible, to break you of it. I told her such a scheme as that was not to be accomplished all at once; you might be persuaded, I said, but would not be forced; therefore I told her if she could not manage you, to send you to me, I could do it without any trouble.

You well merit, my dear Catlane, all the favours you are pleased to acknowledge from Mr. A— and me; and we shall ever be happy to render you all the friendship in our power.—I cannot help smiling at that part of your letter, where you beg me to inform you how to get the better of those high notions which you seem to be so wonderfully possessed of. It is hard to alter the real disposition; yet good sense will in a great measure correct it. I look upon ambition to be one of the most destructive principles in nature, and affords nothing but discontent, even to those who can pursue it with all the power of inexhaustible wealth. It is a kind of artificial poverty, ever in want; and tho' always receiving, can never be satisfied. But believe me it is to be conquered if checked in time; for tho' it has been a predominant passion in the family, from the time of William the Conqueror; yet all greatness must have an end. But why, my dear Catlane, does not prudence and œconomy found as grateful to the ear as pride and ambition? I think they would be excellent substitutes, and will certainly produce much better effects.

You must not distress yourself with the thoughts of what your family has been, in respect to fortune,

but regulate your conduct according to your present income, which will exceed them as far in point of prudence as they did you in that of riches.

You say, what is life without its enjoyments? and I say, what is life without the knowledge how to enjoy it? Knowledge, my dear Catlane, is confined to two things; first, in knowing ourselves; second, in the being satisfied in the situation we are placed in, and humbly submitting ourselves to the will of Providence, who will enable us to bear, with patience, those disagreeable trials, which we can by no means avoid.

I remain your's affectionately,

M. A—.

LETTER XXIX.

MISS CATLANE TO MRS. A—.

FINDING my health and spirits declining very fast, from the dissatisfaction I saw at P— Hall, I have prevailed upon Mrs. Catlane to let me go and board in Hill Town; where I am, at present, with a widow lady: but as it does not at all suit me, I shall leave it as soon as I hear of another more to my mind.

I have been here a week to-day; in which time a circumstance has happened to me, which induces me to solicit your advice. It is as follows—The evening after I came to Hill Town, the lady I board with asked me to take a walk. In our way we called upon a friend of hers to look at his garden, which really is very beautiful; and the man, tho' nothing more than a common mechanic, seems to display

display much taste in his house and gardens ; and a particular neatness in himself ; and he seems to be a plain, honest man. He is a widower, about eight and twenty ; has got two small children, who are provided for by his first wife. This man has made an offer of marriage to me ; and short as our acquaintance is, he has been to my mother to ask her consent, which she really has given him ; for he professes much sincerity, and has a great deal of religion, which are very strong advocates with her : and she has such a high opinion of a man in business, that I am not certain but I shall be obliged to have this spark, or go back to P— Hall. Believe me, dear Madam, I have no partiality to any man living, as a husband ; I could therefore make myself happy with any man of good character and morals ; and provided this man is what he appears to be, and what his neighbours say that he is, a man of property and true probity, I may be as well off with him as to have one of a gayer disposition ; especially as I am thought to be too much inclined that way, and as my situation is such that I do not know what fortune I shall have ; if I did, I would not marry any man at present ; but the life I lead at home is insupportable ; and the expence I am at here does not by any means suit me ; therefore, my dear Madam, let me have your advice upon the matter as soon as you can.

I return you my sincere thanks for your kind instructions ; and believe me I mean to turn over a new leaf with myself, and entirely give up all thoughts of frolicking about, and confine my ideas to things that may prove more advantageous to me ; and depend upon it you shall hear of such a change in my disposition, that, in time, I shall be one of the gravest matrons in the world. When I can quite forget B— Hall, I may make myself pretty easy ; but no time, I doubt, will entirely erase it from my memory ; nor would I give up the happiness

piness I enjoyed with you, to be the wife of an emperor, without I had a particular *penchant* for him. And as it is not the fashion for the ladies to make love to the gentlemen, I may never have an offer from the man I could like better than the monster who now pays his address to me. You will excuse me; but he is a great big man, and more fit for my father than my husband, if it should be so. But I have no notion of that at present, without it meets with your approbation; for believe me I will never marry without that.

In anxious expectation of your immediate answer,
I remain, with the greatest respect,

Your humble servant,

S. CATLANE.

LETTER XXX.

MISS SUKEY TO MISS CATLANE.

THREE has been a gentleman at P— Hall, whom I shall call by the name of Mr. Wrong-head, to ask my mother's consent to make his addresses to you. She readily gave her consent; but I am sure you do not think of suffering him to keep you company, for he is forty years old at least, although he tells us he is but eight and twenty; and appears to be a rank methodist, for he did nothing but talk of churches and meetings; and seeing a bible in the parlour window, he sat down and read almost the whole book of Genesit to my poor dear mother, who is so deaf that I don't think she heard one word, but seemed highly delighted to see his mouth go. For my part, every time he

WAS

was finishing a chapter, I was for going out of the room, but he always called out "I shall soon have done, Miss; do sit down. I am so fond of scripture I could read it for ever." "Yes," thinks I, "but I should be sorry to be obliged to hear you." Real religion, my dear sister, ought not to be treated in that ludicrous manner: I should rather suppose the man either wantonly took up the bible to amuse himself, for want of something else to do; or merely to let us know he could read; and believe me he is a man of none of the brightest judgment.

Pray, Sally, what think you of this monstrous good man, or rather this good monster, for he is a huge creature, and I am sure you never mean to have him. A pretty husband for you, truly; a man who must be all the week measuring coals by the bushel, and on a Sunday read half the bible over to you, by way of treat: I make no doubt but you will be mighty fond of this kind of life. He asked me if you was fond of going to church? I told him, no, to hear what he would say. He lifted up his eyes as a mark of disapprobation, and said he never missed going to church or meeting three times a day, and sometimes more; I said that was as often as I went in a year. He said his father always from a child made him keep to his church. I find he does so from custom, as a horse goes into the stable of its own accord; and it is my opinion with as little religion.

You see I have been very particular in letting you know the conversation that passed; for my mother likes him much, and thinks he will make a very good husband; and as you are young, she likes him the better for being old, and thinks the match will be more agreeable. Few people, I believe, would be of her way of thinking.

I told Mr. W— you was very gay, and would not bear much contradiction, and that they might lead

lead you any where, but I defied any person to drive you. He said he was very hasty ; but that his passion soon cooled, and he never thought any more of it. I told him that kind of temper would not suit you ; for people are so much off their guard who give way to passion, that they may say a thing in a moment, which may not be forgot by those it is said to for seven years ; and that you was of that way of thinking, that you believed people often made themselves either drunk or mad, on purpose to say those things which otherwise they would be ashamed of. He made me no answer to this ; indeed he does not know what to think of me, nor do I know what to think of him ; for he tells me he shall call me sister, when next he comes to P— Hall ; but I am sure that will never be. He took me as far as Mrs. Friendly's in his chaise, when he returned to Hill Town, and she had the pleasure of seeing him. However, 'tis impossible the poor man should please all, and I fancy his hardest task will be to please you.

I think 'tis mighty strange young Mildman should be in Hill Town and you not know it ; particularly as you correspond together. I cannot but think he has a partiality for you, but seems afraid to declare his passion. I think this would be a much more suitable match for you, in every respect : he is a young man, you know, of large fortune, and a genteel profession, with an undeniable character. He appears to me to have but one fault, and that is, his being too close ; and yet I can hardly think that can be deemed one, so long as he lives and appears like a gentleman. For I have no notion of people's hurting their fortune to be thought generous ; for you often see those kind of people come to distreis ; and who are treated with so much contempt, as they, even by the very people, who have received benefactions from them. This will ever keep me from wishing for a fortune

to give away, but let me have no more than I have prudence to take care of.

I fear your unhappy situation may be the cause of your encouraging the addresses of a man, who I think no-ways formed to make you happy ; yet I know not how to advise you, for I know it is impossible for you to live here, nor indeed can I much longer.

Whenever you alter your situation, that it may afford you every satisfaction, is the sincere wish of your affectionate sister,

SUKEY CATLANE.

LETTER XXXI.

MRS. A — TO MISS CATLANE.

THE importance of your last favour renders me at a loss to answer it ; and for me to give my opinion concerning a man, whom I know nothing of, except from a flight description, is too great an undertaking. However I will give you a few thoughts upon the matter, as impartially as I can.

If the person you mention is a man of character and property, I cannot see any impropriety in such a match ; for, in the first place, he is arrived at manhood—and secondly, his having been once married, he must certainly know the expences of a family ; and as he is not sure you will have any fortune till the death of Mrs. Catlane, he cannot place much dependance upon that ;—he must be, therefore, worse than mad, seeing you are such a smart, lively girl, to make you his wife, without a good prospect of maintaining you. The greatest obstacle that appears to me, is the children.—But I know

know no person, whose disposition is so likely to make a good, and tender step-mother, as yours ; and no man, I think, could be so base, who has been so fortunate as to get a second mother for his children, as to behave otherwise than with tenderness and affection towards her.

I am afraid, my dear Miss Catlane, least your unhappy situation should induce you to take a husband, without making proper enquiry concerning his character and circumstances, which may otherwise involve you in many difficulties ; and your friends ought to be very particular, in guarding against an evil of such a nature.

In the choice of a husband, there cannot be a better recommendation than honesty and sobriety ; and if he be a man of sense, I am sure you will not make yourself miserable ; nor do I think it possible for you to be unhappy long together, so much vivacity and good-nature as you are possessed of. Yet, my dear, I should be very sorry indeed to hear of your being united to a man who was likely to make you a disagreeable companion ; for there is, I think, something exceeding awful and solemn in the change ; and if we were to consider it with all its disadvantages, I believe few people would be so ready to enter into so uncertain a state.

I have endeavoured, as above, to give you a few hints, as to my opinion on a matter of such momentous consequence ; for there is not any thing on earth so destructive as anarchy in families. May this, then, my dear girl, never be a means of your taking too rash a step, is the sincere wish of your affectionate friend,

M. A—.

L E T T E R

LETTER XXXII.

MISS CATLANE TO LADY SMITH DAVAL.

THE pleasure I received, at being honoured with your kind letter, I want words to express. When, oh when, shall I again behold a friend of such inestimable value? alas! every hope is fled, and I dare not think of ever again beholding my valuable friends at B— Hall, for it has given me inexpressible uneasiness at being obliged to decline accepting of your kind invitation, which would have been an opportunity so much to my advantage. Indeed Lady S—, there seems to be nothing but disappointment and wretchedness for me in every thing I undertake.

It gave me much concern, in observing that part of your letter where you say there is little or no faith in women; and indeed it struck me more forcibly, knowing it came from you, who is so able to speak from the knowledge of the sex, which you have but too dearly purchased: and I hope I shall not be so wanting in justice to myself, as ever to forget your Ladyship's friendly advice. But, in my unhappy situation, where can I fly to for relief, where can I lay open my afflicted heart, but to the tender sympathizing bosom of a female? And, oh! if the heart of a woman will not pity, will not commiserate—let her at once be struck out from the creation; let there be no traces of their form left upon the earth, but let some other of a diviner mould, be fashioned in her stead, whose finer feelings are impressed with every sense, that yields compassion to the afflicted mind, till then, let not the poet speak of dignity and love; but let grace be in our hearts, no matter how we step.

L

I fear

I fear I shall not be able to distinguish the spurious from the real wit which you mention; therefore it is a thousand to one but I get some blockhead or other; but that I may not, is the wish of your Ladyship's obedient servant,

S. CATLANE.

LETTER XXXIII.

MRS. WRONGHEAD TO MISS SUKEY.

THE tremendous day is past, and I am become the wife of Mr. Wronghead! Had you told me a week ago that this would ever have happened, I should not have believed it; and I declare I am married to a man without ever giving my consent; nor do I remember that he ever asked me.

The night before, a gentleman called with Mr. W—, and in the course of our conversation, he asked me if I was fond of children; for he had heard I was likely to have two very soon; and in the eyes of the world a mother-in-law was not a pleasing task. I made him but little answer, for I had no idea I was going to be a step-mother so soon. He seemed a very sensible man; and said he had no doubt but Mr. Wronghead would make me a good husband. Soon after they went away, but about ten o'clock Mr. W— came again, and told me he had brought a licence with him, and begged I would not refuse him my hand the next morning. At this unexpected solicitation, I was absolutely thunderstruck, but more so when he told me he had ordered the clergyman to be ready by eight o'clock in the morning to marry us, that we might be ready for the ten o'clock coach, to set

set off for London. By this you may judge what little time I had to consider of it ; and thro' the fear of again returning to P— Hall, I complied, after he had begged and intreated me with all the eloquence he was master of, for near two hours. The next morning we were married, and set off directly for London, where we arrived at five o'clock in the evening.

We were received by his friends very kindly ; but various are their opinions concerning me, I assure you ; for they are all of them trades-people ; they see something in me that does not please them ; neither do they think me a proper wife for Mr. Wronghead ; in short, I can see I appear too fine for them by their looks ; but they are all very civil.

I must now tell you how I spend my time in this great city. It is generally the custom for strangers to see the curiosities of this place ; consequently I am dragged about from one end of the town to the other, like a dancing dog. The first place I went to, was Saint Paul's ; from thence to see the wax work in Fleet street ; we then went to the Tower, to see the lions, and every other place of public amusement.

I find Mr. W— is such a saving man, that he has suffered me to spoil a facque and coat of five or six pounds value, sooner than hire a coach, which is but a shilling. This has put me quite out of patience with my husband already ; for you may judge of a person's disposition, better in those little circumstances, than in things of more consequence ; and depend upon it a man can have but a weak judgment, who, to save a shilling, loses a pound. Besides, it hurts my pride, to think I should have so little respect paid me :—however I will not break my heart about it, but take my husband as I find him.

We purpose coming to Hill Town next week; when I shall fashion myself as much to the tradesman's wife as I can; and as no one there knows who, or what I was, they will take me to be some poor foolish country girl, glad to snap at a husband at any rate. But be that as it may, I am ready to meet with such a reception, and shall always be upon my guard, and endeavour to keep them in ignorance of the real cause; for if Mr. W— makes a good husband, I may have no reason to repent; but if not, I shall thank the first cause of my unhappiness as the foundation of the rest. As to the world, I am determined to take it as I find it, and shew all the fortitude I am mistress of; for I must now appear in a very humble stile, to what I ever expected. This I am sensible of; but as Mrs. A— always told me, it was no matter what part of the play we acted, if we did it but well, nothing shall be wanting on my part, in respect to duty and regard to Mr. W—'s children; and as to himself, he must rise or fall in my esteem, according as he behaves.

Young Mildman came to town the day before us. Mr. W— knows him; he met him in the street, and told him he was married again, and that he would call upon him in the evening and bring his wife with him, as he had heard me say I knew him; but he would not tell him who I was, nor did he tell me who I was to call upon. We accordingly went to his chambers in the temple; but when we got there, never shall I forget the looks of Mildman: for some time he was speechless, and his whole soul seemed in his eyes. He made several attempts to speak to me, but could not. At length he faintly wished me joy; but with a voice, which, gentle as it was, thundered terror to my heart. We soon left him, as I found my company was disagreeable to him. Oh, my dear sister, never till then had I any idea that he had

had any particular esteem for me. I sincerely wish him much more happy ; and I hope, in future, he will speak his mind more freely, and not lose another wife for want of asking her the question,

I am, dear Sukey,

Your ever affectionate sister,

S. WRONGHEAD.

LETTER XXXIV.

MISS SUKEY CATLANE TO MRS. WRONGHEAD.

MY surprise when I received the news of your marriage is past description ; yet when I consider the disagreeable situation you were in, I do not so much wonder at it.

I am happy to find, that the gentleman you have given your hand to so inconsiderately, is a man of an undeniably character. But the grand point is your own happiness ; and I make no doubt but you are capable of making a very good wife, young as you are ; and I hope too an excellent step-mother. You may have a greater opportunity of shewing your goodness of heart, by this seeming unfavourable circumstance, in becoming a mother-in-law, than you ever might have had : and you certainly must be a person of Mr. W—'s choice, which I suppose is the only thing that can promote happiness and sincerity on the side of the man ; for few women would make bad wives, if they had good husbands, at least I am sure no woman of sense would.

You seem to think Mr. Wronghead penny wise and pound foolish, which indeed is often the case with people of contracted ideas ; but you must reason him out of these silly notions, and if he has the least grain of understanding, he will endeavour to get the better of that disagreeable part of his conduct. Indeed, Sally, you must begin to look upon yourself as a wife now, and not a girl to be flattered by every smart young fellow you see ; nor give way to a thought of the kind ; if you do, you will soon find disagreeable consequences ensue from it.

I know no error you are so likely to fall into as the being brought up in a school of flattery all your life. If you are so unfortunate as to be united to a man, with neither good sense or good nature, you will indeed be very miserable ; the former will be the worst, as you will see his faults in so clear a light, that not one will escape your notice ; whereas, his want of good nature, will be but little noticed, from the superfluity of your own.

Mr. Saveall has been here ; he knows Mr. W—, and says you could not have married better, for he is certain you have got as steady a man for a husband as you possibly could have ; but he added, he never thought Miss Sally would have liked such a grave looking person as Mr. Wronghead. However, you will not have to blame yourself for marrying a *rake* ; indeed I think a man of that sort, blest with the smallest degree of prudence, would have been much more suitable to your disposition, than the person you have got ; tho', notwithstanding, he may make you a good husband ; and you seem determined to make him a good wife.

It was, I confess, somewhat strange, you should be introduced to young Mildman. Poor fellow, I always thought he had a particular regard for you ; and you seem not to have had penetration enough to see it ; but I believe fate was more in fault than you,

you, as it is the only thing of the kind you did not see into. If the young Counsellor can plead no better at the bar, than he does with a woman, I pity him from my soul.

I have informed Mrs. Friendly of your marriage; she says it was the best thing you could do, as there was but little prospect of your being happy if you had not. We think, ere long, to see you at P— Hall; where I shall not forget to lay the bible in the parlour window, that your spouse may finish the book of Genesis, which he began to read to my poor mother the first time he came to see us:—It had a very good effect on his side, for he certainly preached her out of her senses, or she would never have given her consent for you to marry him, a man she knew so little of. But people are very often deceived, though they think they know a person ever so well; for no politic man will shew you what he really is, in disposition, till it is out of your power to help yourself; and I dare say your gentleman is learned enough to guard against this error: and may he have sense sufficient to see your good qualities, and prudence to correct your little foibles, (which will render you a very amiable woman, and him a happy man), is the sincere wish of

Your truly affectionate sister,

S. CATLANE.

LETTER

LETTER XXXV.

MRS. WRONGHEAD TO MRS. A—.

THOUGH all the world should condemn me for the rash step I have taken, yet it will give me the highest pleasure and happiness, to find one friend, whose goodness I have ever relied on, still to be so far prepossessed in my favour, as to think me worthy of her esteem ; notwithstanding I have blundered into matrimony so precipitately, with a man I know nothing of. But you knew, my dear Madam, my former situation ; therefore, I flatter myself, from your last letter, that you are not averse to it ; and I am sure, except Mr. Wronghead treats me very ill, I cannot be more unhappy, than I have been. I shall put on a grave sanctified face, and a close cap, and model myself into a good housewife ; and it is with pleasure I inform you, that I am not to be spoiled by too much indulgence, for Mr. W— seems so very wise, that he knows how many times a farthing worth of sand will sand the house all over ; and also how many times as much milk ought to be skimmed before it is given to the cat, much better than I do ; for upon my word he is so very knowing in that which he has no business with, that I am at a loss to account for his ridiculous humours. Methinks I hear you say, “ she finds fault betimes—what must we expect seven years hence ? ” Why, dear Madam, cause enough.

I have been in London three weeks, at a relation of Mr. Wronghead’s ; they tell me he is but a very indifferent temper ; so Heaven knows what I shall find him, since his own flock think him defective ; but I have the vanity to think if he is not wanting in common sense, I can manage him ; indeed

indeed nothing shall be wanting on my part to fulfil the engagements I have made ; and however unfit I may appear for the trades-man's wife, I hope to have it in my power to convince the world it is both wrong and at the same time impossible to judge at all times from outward appearances.

As I find it is not agreeable to Mr. W— to keep much company, I do not mean to do it ; nor do I wish it ; for I cannot expect to form a connection in Hill Town like my dear Lady Smith Daval. I wonder what she will think of this sudden change ? I fear she will blame me ; had she not been in London, I should have had her opinion concerning this hasty match.

You must excuse the many imperfections, which from the perturbation of spirits will naturally occur ; and comfort me with your advice, for I have always made it a rule, since I have had the pleasure of being acquainted with you, to strictly adhere to every caution you were pleased to give me ; indeed I shall find some difficulty in conducting myself properly in the situation I have plunged into without your kind assistance, altho' I seem to have great judgment now 'tis too late.

I find Mr. W— is a party-spirited man ; for which reason he is seldom known to be right. May it be in the power of her to set him right, who has the honour to be

Your most obedient servant,

S. WRONGHEAD.

LETTER

LETTER XXXVI.

LADY SMITH DAVAL TO MRS. WRONGHEAD.

I Wish to call you by no other name than Catlane : but Mrs. A— has told me you have changed it. Indeed I should not have been more shocked if she had informed me you was dead. For whatever you may think of it, I should prefer a sudden death to a sudden marriage, because I have, to my sorrow, experienced the evils of it.

I suppose you have been silly enough to take a leaf out of Mrs. A—'s book, and married a man beneath yourself ; with this view, that if he made a bad husband, you might force him to make a good servant. Some such notions as these, you must have in your head, or you could not, surely, have been in such a hurry to sacrifice yourself in the manner you have ; and I can never believe but this mighty feat is planned after Mrs. A—'s scheme ; for I suppose you asked her advice ; and believe me I think myself very unfortunate in not being at B— Hall ; for I certainly should have said so much upon the ill consequences that would necessary attend on such a match, as, without you had, indeed, quite lost your senses, I will engage you would never have ventured. Oh heavens, Catlane ! what have you done ? You have plunged into everlasting ruin, without either help or pity ; and to avoid a temporary evil, have drawn yourself into eternal misery. This is, indeed, too often the case ; and the misconduct of parents never fails to communicate this error to their children ; for I am sure if you had been actuated by your reason, you could never have made such a rash mistake as this. I can hardly believe it possible that you can have married in the space of six weeks, the time I have

have been in London, and you never thought of it then, nor does it seem you knew the man before that time. Why, Catlane, you absolutely deserve a strait waistcoat ; and as for Mrs. A—, I told her she ought to have been transported for encouraging you to take such an unguarded step. For though she has been so fortunate at her time of life, as to get two such excellent husbands, without taking the least thought about them, it is no reason why other people should be so : and let me tell you, the man who might be very capable of making *her* happy, might not have it in his power to make *you* much more than miserable. Indeed I think it very strange ; and particularly in you who had it in your power, to make your fortune, if you had not been in such a violent hurry to throw yourself away, in such a fit of madness ; and I cannot but think such another attack might induce you to marry some other man ; for who knows, when you come to find yourself deceived in the first bargain, but your genius may tempt you to engage with a second. I should not be surprised at it in the least ; for one error seldom goes alone : and though I know nothing of the person you have taken for your husband, yet, I will venture to affirm, he is by no means a proper object for a girl of your wit and spirits.

I assure you I am very unhappy at being disappointed of a companion, in whom I had placed the greatest part of my happiness. Had you been so lucky as to have come once more to B—m, I think I could have found out a husband for you, who would have made you as happy as you can ever expect to be with a man, who has but little more to recommend him, than the claim every person has to a good character, and who has done nothing in public to forfeit it : but poor is such a recommendation of a husband, to a girl of your ideas.—You must excuse this kind of mortification ;

tion; but believe me I wish you every happiness, the uncertain state into which you have entered, can afford; and sincerely hope the gentleman may make himself worthy so amiable a girl; and I think he may thank his stars he has found you such, for I will venture to say you was never designed for him.

Let me hear from you soon; and inform me what disposition he is of, and I will then determine your fate in my next; I may have been too rash in my judgment in this, do not therefore despair, till your sentence is passed; and believe me I shall ever be happy to subscribe myself

Your ever affectionate friend,

E. SMITH DAVAL.

LETTER XXXVII.

COUNSELLOR MILDMAN TO MRS. WRONGHEAD.

AS this letter must put a final conclusion to all correspondence between us, I must beg to inform you, that I once thought you could be no stranger to my intentions of making you my wife. This indeed was my sole reason for leaving Ipswich, which I did to avoid Miss K—, whose father offered me, as a portion with her, twenty thousand pounds. What could induce you to marry in so precipitate a manner, I cannot conceive; yet I am vain enough to suppose, that had I been at Hill Town, this would not have transpired.

When I reflect on the happiness I once enjoyed in your correspondence, but more especially in your

your conversation ; and now, alas ! to find that I am to be *for ever* debarred that happiness in future ; when I think on these things oh how it does shock me ; they strike home to my too susceptible heart, and I become, as it were, annihilated.

Pardon me, dear Madam, but I must for ever condemn and pity your misguided conduct. I, indeed, know but little of the man you have so much blessed ; yet the very different stile of your acquaintance, will be enough to make your life miserable, who have been always used to keep the first and best company ; besides you will be obliged to put up with many things as a tradesman's wife, which will by no means suit your disposition ; nor was you indeed ever designed for any thing of the kind.

I can never attribute your rash step to any thing but Mrs. Catlane's having scolded you for going to some assembly ; and to be revenged, you went to Hill Town, and got the first person that offered, for a husband. I shall ever regret my misfortune in not knowing your mind : but if you could be guilty of this irrecoverable mistake, who wants for neither wit nor judgment in most things, I shall never be persuaded to the contrary, but that it had been better for your sex had they been born fools ; then might the world cease to wonder at the many tricks that have been played by them. But cruel as I may appear to you, I wish you had as great a regard for your own happiness as I have, you would not then have ventured upon such a foundation of misery, at least such a distant prospect of felicity. I wish for your sake I may be deceived ; and may you live many years much happier, than from circumstances you or I can have reason to expect ; and may you never look back and reflect upon the sudden change in your life, with that keen reproach, which, in

some measure, is due to my own folly, in not acquainting you with my intentions. But fate, alas ! ordained I should not be so happy. I mean therefore to give up all thoughts of the law, and retire to Maldon-Bridge, and there live upon my fortune, and never more trouble myself with the thoughts of a wife, but rather let me spend my days in upbraiding the uncertainty of the frail sex ; and in pointing out to mankind, the various perplexing anxieties under which he labours, whenever he attempts to encounter with so delightful, so enchanting, and so deceitful a person as a woman.

I must confess I could wish to continue our correspondence ; but Mr. W— is, I find, no stranger to that green eyed monster, jealousy ; this must, indeed, be a great recommendation to a woman of your lively disposition ;—but you may teach him a wiser scheme ;—tell him a man is never safe in that case longer than he thinks himself so. Excuse, dear Madam, the wish of our continuing a correspondence ; and whatever you may think of this seeming strange epistle, it comes from one whose heart and fortune were once at your disposal ; and whose only happiness was placed in your affections. And may you experience every blessing this life can afford ; and may your uncommon flow of spirits never be exhausted, nor fail of administering every comfort to your afflicted mind, when friends look cool, and fortune lends but little aid : then may we see that courage in a woman's breast is not defaced. I shall for ever deplore my loss ; but with this pleasing reflection that if I am more deserving of you than the man whom you have so precipitately taken to your bed, we may yet meet in another world, where with uninterrupted happiness I may for ever enjoy you. This is the sincere wish of your faithful friend,

JOHN MILDMAN.
LETTER

LETTER XXXVIII.

MRS. WRONGHEAD TO MISS SUKEY CATLANE.

THE evening I returned from P— Hall, I was very much surprised at a letter which my servant gave me, and said that a gentleman had called and left it with her, and begged she would give it privately to me. I found by the hand it was from Mr. Mildman who upbraids me very much for my ill conduct in marrying; the particulars you shall see at another opportunity. I cannot but think him very much to blame in making an open declaration of his passion for me at a time when he knows me to be another man's wife; I think it is a strange way of shewing his esteem; but he may suppose I shall find myself hurt at the loss of his fortune, if I had no great attachment for his person; he has therefore communicated his sentiments I suppose in order to mortify me.

The letter which you gave me, was from Lady Smith Daval; and let me beg of you to take great care of them, for I would not have Mr. W— know, on any account, that I have, or ever had, any acquaintance with people of fashion, as it might convey to his idea that I am the less fit for a wife of his. Lady S— is very much provoked at the match tho' she knows nothing of the man, and condemns me very much for my foolishness. Indeed her Ladyship is too severe upon me; for I am not so vain of my person or abilities as to think I could have any pretensions without a fortune to look for a husband in a higher sphere than him I have got; and I am determined, if he uses me well to think him in every respect worthy of me, in defiance to all the greatness in the world. I own

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It is beyond description what I have suffered since I have found Mr. W— is not fond of children ; for he will not suffer me to have the two children at home ; he says I shall spoil them by indulging them in my foolish ways, as he is pleased to call it ; but I think there is no great fear of a step-mother spoiling them, or indulging them too much. I think you will be surprised when you come to Hill Town, to find how fond they are of me already ; they seem to look up to me for protection, from the austere disposition of their father, who really keeps them at too great a distance, which gives me great apprehensions, that it will sooner create fear than love, in them.

I have had but few visitors since I have resided at Hill Town ; for the inhabitants are formed into so many parties, and so censorious, that really it is impossible to receive any pleasure in the company of such beings, whose only amusement is to “ kill characters,” and at every sentence dies a name. I cannot forbear telling you of the grand consultation held by these kind matrons. You must know it is the custom of this place with the neighbours, to appoint a meeting after a wedding, to pass their judgment upon the match, why and wherefore the couple came together ; but mine happened to perplex and puzzle them more than any one that ever came under their inspection ; however, after turning the matter this way and that way ; and after many pro’s and con’s upon the subject, they concluded that I was an ideot, or disordered in my senses. This would have passed off very well, but for an old woman coming in, whose judgment I have cause to remember. Being asked her opinion upon the matter in debate, she said, that, from the gay and smart appearance I made, I must be a kept mistress to some great man.

You

You will conceive, by this time, what sort of a place this Hill Town is. But I believe if I strike out *i*, and put in an *e*, you will then have some idea of it. I find I shall never be at a loss for scandal, for the whole town seems, as it were, infected with it; and I must certainly raise some ill report of my neighbours, to keep them in countenance, for the ill they have said of me;—for if strangers suffer in this atrocious manner, depend upon it the more they know of a person, the more they will say to your disadvantage.

I am, dear Sukey,

Your affectionate sister,

S. WRONGHEAD.

LETTER XXXIX.

MRS. WRONGHEAD TO LADY SMITH DAVAL.

FORGIVE me, my dear Lady Smith, if I have offended you; for believe me it was unintentionally; and I will take care never to offend again in the like circumstance. Indeed I married for no other view than to guard me against misfortunes; and if I have inadvertently plunged myself into more misery by trying to escape from the impending evil which seemed to threaten me, I can only add, that if the chance of fate is not to be avoided, I trust I shall never want that fortitude of mind, which can only be found in a conscience free from guilt. This will support me against all the storms of adverse fortune; and I must think that it is good for me to be afflicted, and that it is

undoubtedly ordained to answer some great end of a Superior Being, which we weak-fighted mortals are not able to comprehend. But a time will come, when the most hidden mysteries shall be revealed ; and then shall we see that a life of sorrow leads to a life of glory. Whoever, therefore, reflects seriously on this subject, will certainly find an alleviation of all their melancholy, and a comfort in that hope which is given us as a compensation for all our sufferings.

If that old beldame, Fortune's, grand design is to punish me, I will endeavour to overcome her keenest darts, by the aid of reason. It is nothing more, Lady S—, than bearing, with a true fortitude and resignation, the insults and indignities of a malicious world : and if I can so far keep an ascendancy over my passions as to stand unmoved at the oppressions of the more fortunate, I shall think myself a conqueror greater than Alexander, after he had conquered the world.

Methinks I see you smile at my vanity ; and I dare say you think it a strange epistle for a new-married woman. But really you must excuse it ; for I am absolutely at a loss to address your Ladyship, therefore I choose a sentimental subject. I am sorry you blame Mrs. A— for her advice to me ; it is true I asked her opinion concerning my marriage, and she thought as I did, that a man in business, and of a good character, was as much as I could expect, without I had a fortune in my own power : and believe me I read your affectionate letter with the greatest mortification, for I have ever placed the greatest confidence in your judgment of people in general. I feel myself condemned as much without giving you any further account of my situation, as if the sentence was already passed ; and as to Mr. Wronghead, his disposition will not bear your Ladyship to scrutinize upon it, till I have made a reformation in it. Oh, was I but

but near you, I should then enjoy every comfort I could wish in the conversation of her whose friendship is the greatest happiness and honour that can be conferred upon,

Your dutiful and obliged,

S. WRONGHEAD.

LETTER XL.

MRS. WRONGHEAD TO COUNSELLOR MILDMAN.

BY chance, your very surprising letter came into my hands ; otherwise you might have been the means of an everlasting discord between Mr. Wronghead and me ; particularly as you are so well acquainted with his suspicious disposition. Perhaps you did it with that design. But be that as it may, your declarations are unfriendly, and likewise unpardonable. It appears to me to arise more from the vanity you have placed in your fortune, than any regard towards me ; and therefore you take a pleasure in offering that which is now out of my power to receive. But was it in my power to receive it, I make no doubt but you would be as cautious how you disposed of yourself to the best advantage as you have ever seemed to be. For my own part, debased as I may appear in your eyes, by my matrimonial connection, I shall always suppose, that the man who has taken me out of my late unhappy situation is, while he continues to use me well, more than deserving of me ; for gratitude has a higher place in my esteem than love, therefore I have not the least fear of being wretched, if Mr. W— has the least of that in his compo-

composition, and shall make a claim upon his affections, as a reward for my conduct. I assure you I desire no more ; and I have the pleasure to inform you that I do not find, at present, a tradesman's wife so despicable a being ; nor do I think a husband can be the worse for not being a gentleman ; nor are my ideas so very much exalted as not to see true greatness of mind even in a beggar. This it is shall support me, "*when friends look cool,*" "*and fortune lends but little aid;*" and those who seemed to pity me, now pull off the mask, and shew me what they really are ;—then shall I find that friendship is but an empty name, whose eloquence flows spontaneously from the tongue, but never once was rooted in the heart.

It appears very strange to me, that people can wish to insinuate notions to a person, to make them unhappy ; but I flatter myself I have too much sense to be any ways hurt by this device ; but there are people in the world who might have suffered all the author of this fiction could have wished. Believe me, Sir, I can see no crime in being married to Mr. W—, without I had been attached to another person ; for I am so unfortunate, that I could never fall in love with any man for the sake of his fortune ; therefore if I have got an honest man, it is all I wish.

As to happiness, according to your notion of things, 'tis ridiculous to look for it in this world ; but if I can conquer my passions so far as to bring them into subjection to my humble situation, disinterested in every respect, but in that of doing as I would wish to be done by, I may without vanity suppose I am arrived at the highest happiness that can be on earth.

If you should live to hear, that after twenty years confinement to a suspicious husband, as you are pleased to call Mr. W—, and a person you suppose by no means cut out to make me happy,—then

then if you find I have fulfilled my duty in the matrimonial ties, do you, in justice to my memory, say, that real worth is not to be found in the rich only: and however poor may be my lot in this low orb of things, may the Gods grant me the greatest blessing that can be given to man—a conscience free from guilt, a mind enriched with every tender feeling worthy of my sex, and happy in administering comfort to the afflicted mind; and if mercy be one of the choicest attributes of heaven, let me be possessed of that most precious of all gifts, that I may be as willing to forgive my enemies, as they have been in throwing out ambiguous insinuations in order to distress the mind of her who thus informs you that she will never open another letter that she can possibly suppose comes from you; and be assured, that however I may be debased in fortune, I shall still retain that greatness of soul, as to look down upon insults in points of honour, as the greatest indignity that could have been offered to, Sir,

Your most obedient humble servant,

S. WRONGHEAD.

LETTER XLI.

MRS. A— TO MRS. WRONGHEAD.

IT gives Mr. A— and myself great pleasure to find you are married to a person, who is not altogether disagreeable to Mrs. Catlane's wishes: and I make no doubt but you will be much happier in your own mind, than you could have been had you remained single. Therefore, if you can con-

fine

fine your views within the circle of a tradesman's wife, you need not be afraid of being uncomfortable.

Lady Smith Daval is very much offended at me, for encouraging you to marry a man whom, she thinks, cannot by any means be qualified to make you happy. I told her every body was not lucky enough to marry a Lord; nor need they desire it, since they had their faults as well as other men. She replied, no person, who had a mean opinion of themselves, ever came to any good. Therefore you see it is no wonder her Ladyship has been so unfortunate.

You are too satirical upon Mr. W—; and you must excuse me in giving you a caution against allowing yourself too much liberty of this kind; but more especially if to his face, or to any of his acquaintance; for if they have not wit enough to take it as you mean it, by way of raillery and good nature, they may suppose you look upon your husband as beneath your notice, and consequently with contempt; and believe me there are enough in the world ready to put the worst constructions upon every thing they hear or see. You are in a strange place, and among his friends; and depend upon it their eyes and ears are open to every thing you do or say, particularly as your person and appearance is so much above their own.

You hint that Mr. W— is of a very close disposition. If so, I would wish you to take no notice of the stile you lived in when single, for fear he should suppose you are not so happy in a more private life: neither must you mention your routs or assemblies; your riding a hunting with Sir John B—, and the like; for a man who is not possessed of very liberal sentiments, might think you less capable of rendering yourself an agreeable companion for him, after living so much superior. I know you to be of that happy temper, that you may

may be formed into any shape, by those who treat you well; therefore if Mr. W— is happy in his own disposition he will never find any fault in yours; and I hope I shall hear you are a very happy couple.

I never saw Lady Smith so much hurt at any thing as she seemed to be when I told her you was married. She said she had rather have given you a thousand pounds, if that would have prevented it, than have had it been; and I dare say she would; for indeed she is beyond any thing when she takes it into her head. I wish to my heart she had been in the country, though I do believe you must have gone without a husband, if she had, for the force of her arguments, joined to the good opinion you have of her, would soon have over-balanced every thought of matrimony out of your mind. Therefore I cannot but think yours was entirely a match of chance, and I sincerely wish it may be a happy one, which that it may, is the sincere wish of

Your ever affectionate friend,

M. A.—.

LETTER XLII.

MRS. WRONGHEAD TO SUKEY CATLANE.

I HAD the honour, last Friday, of a visit from Mrs. Friendly, and was only sorry I had not the pleasure of your company also, to make my happiness complete. Mrs. F— seemed delighted with my garden and house, and says I have shewn great taste in the furniture; she seems pleased at my choice in a husband; so if I am not happy it

is

is my own fault. Oh how we are caught by appearances ! no wonder, then, that the young and old are so often dupes to the silly imaginations of a depraved mind in those things which often please the eye, without yielding the least satisfaction to the heart.

I find so much defamation and slander in Hill Town, that I take very little or no pleasure in going out ; so prevalent is this detestable vice, that you would think the very streets were paved with scandal, and that envy stood sentinel at every door ; therefore I am not likely to be very happy in my acquaintance ; for if I go out I have not much to say, and if my neighbours are kind enough to bring me a piece of news of their kind, I do not seem to enjoy it ; so that they look upon me to be little more than a fool, and pity poor Mr. Wronghead for marrying such an insignificant thing, of no other use than to be looked at. Oh how I have been dissected since I came to this place ! I expect you will hear that I am become a mere skeleton, very soon. Some say I am too fine for a tradesman's wife, and too young ; others, that I am too proud ; and more say that I am fit only to sit in the parlour, to be waited on.

A gentleman called upon me not long since, to inform me, that I had better not visit all Mr. Wronghead's relations ; for there was a certain family who were so censorious that they made it a principal point in monopolizing all the defamation they could, that they might have the advantage of retailing it out to the different parties that deal in that line ; which I assure you are not a few. I am informed too, that there is a society known by the name of " the free electors of cuckolds," who meet once a month at the sign of the Horns, in order to elect new members into this laudable fraternity. I will giye you an account of the nature

ture and manner of their chosing, and what appearance constitutes a man worthy of being a member. First, If a man marries a woman ten years younger than himself, he is put down upon the list, except he happens to be turn'd of ninety, in which case he is thought too contemptuous to be admitted into such a worthy body. Secondly, If a man is seen to be of a suspicious turn, the wife is then set down as a common strumpet, and he becomes the grand master of the society. Thirdly, If a married woman is seen to speak to a single man in the street, without the husband is with her, he is dubb'd a knight of the order at the next meeting. And fourthly, If the wife dresses gayer than her neighbours, it is a never-failing sign that the poor husband's head aches with the weight of his horns, and he is set down as fit for the highest place in the society. These are the heads of the rules that constitute this worthy club; and without a person is above scandal, or below it, they may depend on suffering all the reproach the tongues of these miscreants can possibly suggest. I was told by a relation of Mr. Wronghead's, that his first wife was so shocked at a piece of calumny of this kind, that it is thought it was the death of her.

But my dear Sukey, they shall not kill me; for I think I could take a pleasure in setting all these fiends at work together.—There is but little fear but I shall fall under their rules of condemnation; if so—let their unmerciful judges remember, that the black catalogue of defamation is sealed up in another world; and that it will be opened at the last day, to their eternal confusion. Therefore, may they repent in due time is the hearty wish of

Your affectionate sister,

S. WRONGHEAD.

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LETTER XLIII.

LADY SMITH DAVAL TO MRS. WRONGHEAD,

I FIND there is but little hope of your ever enjoying much felicity in the married state, with such a narrow minded companion as you have got ; therefore I would advise you to keep up your spirits, and resign yourself entirely to the will of fate ; for I shall always think it was some unlucky star, that has decreed your misery here. I know that you are far from happy ; yet, I hope time will make you more reconciled to your situation : which nothing, perhaps, could make supportable, but the being sensible there was no possibility of a change. This it is which renders lost liberty irrecoverable, and ought to make us very cautious how we enter into such a state.

I was equally unfortunate, with yourself, in marrying a man, whom I knew nothing of, in respect to his private character ; but the brilliant appearance he made, added to an agreeable person, soon consigned me to ruin ; and though I was hurried into a match, without the least impression of love ; yet so exquisite was his manner and carriage towards me, that before he left me I began to adore him ; and, cruel as he was, I find myself too much attached to his interest, ever to forget the duty I owe to his memory. But this is not the case with the ordinary part of mankind ; for instead of making themselves the least agreeable to a woman after she becomes his wife, they often sink into a savage kind of moroseness, and treat her more like a slave than a wife. Had I been joined to a man of this turn, I know not what might have been the consequence, for I am sure I should not have been very fond of him. There is always a proper respect

respect and attention, due from every man to his wife; and the only thing that can render him agreeable to her wishes, is paying her that respect which every virtuous woman has a right to claim; and I am often surprised to see men, who are supposed not to want for common sense, so very deficient in this particular. Believe me there can be no felicity without a desire of pleasing; and tho' I am an enemy to my own sex, for their want of esteem towards each other, yet, if a man happens to be the object of their choice, nothing on earth can be more faithful, when treated with kindness and respect; where this is wanting, a man has but little claim to that consummate goodness in her, as to think she can be obedient to his will.

You think the frowns of the world are to be overcome by reason; and that it is possible for a person to appear unaffected, even under the most distressing circumstances in life. I own it requires a greatness of mind, that I am unacquainted with: for in all my troubles, nothing brought me to so low an ebb of misery, as the thoughts of the insults I should meet with from those who were pleased to stile themselves friends, in the days of my prosperity:—this was my reason for chusing to linger out a wretched life in obscurity, in preference to throwing myself into the hands of those, who delight in oppressing the afflicted mind. Shew me the man or woman, who has a heart so highly fraught with sympathy of soul, that might be said to be a stranger to this vice? If you are endowed with the intrinsic gift of regulating your passions, so as to look down upon the frowns of the world with a pleasing contempt, then will I allow you to have more merit than any of your sex or those of the other. But we are all cowards when we combat against inclination; and if you are placed in a situation, which affords you but little prospect

of happiness, even in these early days, I would recommend you to take no notice of it to any one; for the world is ever cruel, and always happy at finding out something to condemn our sex for; and tho' there is no accounting for the strange circumstances that attend some people thro' life, yet we are too ready to assign reasons, which appear to the disadvantage of those we are so ready to condemn. But when I consider that you was so much dependant upon Mrs. Catlane, and that she approved of the match, I cannot forbear thinking but you deserve pity; for the result of your misfortune seems to arise more from other peoples misconduct than your own; and as you are fixed in an unalterable situation, I sincerely wish you to encourage every apparent good quality you may find in the man you are so irrecoverably united to. And may he grow inspired by your example; and may you be happy in such a convert, is the wish and prayer of

Your ever affectionate friend,

E. SMITH DAVAL.

LETTER XLIV.

MISS SUKEY CATLANE TO MRS. WRONGHEAD.

YOUR last letter was too ambiguous to afford me much satisfaction; but from what I can learn from it, your situation and connections are likely to prove very disagreeable; and what I most fear is, your companion is not one of the most agreeable ones; and if so, no wonder you complain of the place.

Mrs.

Mrs. Friendly has been here since she came home, and tells me Mr. Wronghead appears a very agreeable man; yet I cannot think you are happy, though Mrs. F— says you seem so. Indeed those who are unacquainted with your real disposition would be at a loss to tell when you were; for I have known you to put on an air of gaiety, at a time when your heart has been a stranger to every happiness. It seems to be a kind of blessing bestowed upon you, which I hope will support you through all the difficulties and perplexities you have to encounter with in this world; and at the last, arrive at that glorious situation, when all sorrows shall be wiped from your eyes, and where every affliction shall be done away.

While you have such a happy turn of mind, my dear sister, as to enable you to take off your neighbours in such a ludicrous stile, I think you can never want for either mirth or amusement; and upon my word I think they will have as much cause for dreading your *pen*, as you have for that of their *tongues*; yet, if the people in Hill Town, are as censorious as you represent them, they indeed merit all the ridicule you can possibly shew. I must say, it gives me great uneasiness to find the good man so inclined to believe all the foolish tattle which a parcel of old women may preach to him, and with no other view than to laugh at his credulity. For men who appear good humoured to every one but their wives, are, in my opinion, the most dangerous of beings; for let him treat her ever so ill, she will always be supposed to merit it, from the world in general, whose tongue ever lays wait to depreciate, to wound her character, which, tho' it be white as snow or chaste as ice—still they, with hellish manœuvres, are always ready to propagate something to stab her reputation. “It is better, my dear sister, to have a bad epitaph, than their ill reports while we live.”

I long to see what kind of a mother-in-law you make, for I hear you are a very good one. Surely then Mr. W— must be destitute of every feeling and sentiment of gratitude and generosity. He cannot treat you with coolness and disrespect while you thus behave to his children with an affection, warm as if they were your own. I would therefore advise you not to cherish a thought of the kind ; for the bare supposition that he will not treat you well, may be the only reason for your thinking he uses you ill ; and you may therefore suffer as much from imaginary as you could do from real evil. Have then, as mean an opinion of your neighbours as you please, but shew the highest veneration for your husband.

Yours affectionately,

S. CATLANE.

LETTER XLV.

MRS WRONGHEAD TO MRS A—.

WERE you to see me while I am writing this, you would think me really a mother; On one side sits my little boy, and on the other my girl. I assure you they pay so much attention to me, that I shall not have a word spoke till I give the word of command. Believe me, my dear Mrs. A—, I am very fond of the sweet little creatures ; and could I but manage the father as well, I might be a very happy woman.

I will now give you an account how I spend my time.—The morning, I generally devote to family affairs, and am very particular in having every thing in the house comfortable and in proper order;

and

and as I keep but one servant and a boy, you may suppose I have enough to do in a large house, and six in family. As soon as dinner is over, I withdraw into another room to work, while Mr. W— takes a nap for about six hours ; and if he is disturbed before supper-time, he is in such ill humour, that we all tremble at his very looks ; and his voice is like a peal of thunder in our ears. He always gives strict orders to be awoke in time to dress, and to be ready for his club ; which is a meeting of tradespeople at the different public houses every night in the week.

Thus passes my time from day to day ; which may give you some idea how agreeably I live. I don't know whether you will condemn or praise me for telling Mr. W— that I thought it very bad to indulge himself so much in sleeping so long in the day time, and that a man in business ought to be better employed. I assure you this occasioned very high words between us ; for he is of such a contradictory temper that he cannot bear the thoughts of being thwarted in whatever he says or does. He has such a regard and tenderness for my health, that yesterday he insisted on my giving him the keys of the wine cellar, for fear I should get cold in going down for a bottle when it was wanted. Now I cannot help being so ungenerous of sentiment towards him, as to suppose it arises more from a suspicious and narrow disposition, than from any motive of love ; therefore I cannot allow him any merit for his great care. I find, also, that he keeps the key of the garden gate in his pocket, and tells me I shall not go into it now the fruit is ripe, without him, for fear I should hurt myself by eating too much : and I am fool enough to put up with all this, because he says it is from the great regard he has for me. I know not what the world may think of this part of his conduct ; but they must think he is very well off in having such an ignorant

ignorant wife, who can bear to be treated so much like a child; for I am never to go out without asking his leave, nor stay a moment longer than the time affixed by him; and if it so happens that neither he nor any of the servants can come for me, I am not to come alone, nor yet to have any one else. One thing is very disagreeable to me; that is, whenever I go out, I am obliged to charge my memory with every thing that passed in the course of the conversation, and deliver it all to him as soon as I get home, if he can possibly keep awake long enough to hear it.

Mr. W— is a very great party man at elections; and to avoid being on the right side, he takes particular care to be on the wrong: and he has changed sides so often, in order to please the different parties with his vote and interest, that they now begin to look upon him no better than a common enemy, and treat his services with contempt. My dear Madam, it really makes me very unhappy in being united to a man of this principle and character. He spares no expence in indulging himself in this ridiculous folly, which indeed makes me dread the consequences that must ensue from it, for it is almost incredible what losses he has suffered. He acknowledges he has lost most of his business on that account, besides being upwards of a thousand pounds out of pocket; yet for all this he declares he will not give it up. You cannot conceive how disagreeably I am situated with this party-spirited man; some will not visit me, because he was against them at the last election; others, because he is, what they please to term, a turn-coat. Thus it is with me; and as my life is likely to afford some entertainment for the curious, I purpose keeping a little journal of the different occurrences that may happen, and by that means I may be enabled to treat my friends with news quite out of the common stile.

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As you are the only person I wish to communicate my thoughts so freely to, on a subject of so much importance, I shall wait with great impatience for an answer.

I am yours truly and sincerely,

S. WRONGHEAD.

LETTER XLVI.

MRS. WRONGHEAD TO LADY SMITH DAVAL.

THE inexpressible happiness and pleasure I feel, in the late favours I have received from your Ladyship, induces me to solicit a continuance of that correspondence, which is to me the greatest satisfaction I can ever enjoy ; for every day brings with it new prospects of troubles ; and the very thing that would make others truly happy, serves but to make me more wretched. For Mr. W— is of that crazy composition, that a little money makes him mad. He is what I call a follower of schemes : and though he dislikes the trouble of scheming the money out of his own pocket himself, will suffer any other person to do it for him : and as soon as he gets a few hundreds, he directly looks out for a man who can instruct him in the best method of spending it to the worst advantage ; and there is not a day passes but I hear of some clever fellow, just come to town, whom Mr. Wronghead is determined to become acquainted with, in hopes of hearing, at one time or other, of some kind of business that may be carried on without the least trouble or attention, and, in a kind of invisible manner, spring into riches and prosperity. These are

are his ideas; and without something of this sort should happen, I will engage that no kind of business will suit him.

As near as I can, I will give you a description of Mr. W—'s disposition, and then you will be better able to judge of the man. He is by nature one of the strangest productions of the human species; and it would puzzle a wise man to judge by his actions whether he is of the *rationale* or not; for he never gives any reason for what he does; and he is sometimes so elevated at the bare imagination of growing rich, that he will run about the town, telling every one he meets he really is so. At another time, as the fit takes him, he sinks into a settled melancholy, inclining to despair. In this fit, he has sometimes frightened the whole family to death, by telling us he has been often tempted to drown himself. This obliges us to keep as confined as if we were in Newgate; and to smile before him is as great a crime as can be committed. I really am afraid to eat before him; for he lifts up his hands and eyes, and tells us God knows how long we shall get victuals to eat. I have strong reasons for thinking that this melancholy of his is fictitious; for the very day after he has denied us the common necessaries, as being more, he said, than he could afford, he will go and buy some extravagant thing which we do not want, or perhaps order a post chaise, and take me out with him into the country for a week or two, to make the people believe what an indulgent husband he is; for he takes care to tell his friends it is all done to please me. Sometimes I refuse to go; but I find that then he takes company with him which are much more expensive; therefore I am obliged to go; for those who cannot find happiness at home will never find it abroad:—it may divert a wretched mind, but will never cure it; and I cannot forbear smiling at the ignorance of my neighbours, who envy me for

for dressing gay ; and having no family of my own, they think I must be the happiest woman in the world ; when at the same time I have not a servant in my house who would change situations with me, was it in their power.

However Mr. W— may seem, in the eye of the world, to have no particular vice ; yet so great are his failings in respect to care and tenderness for his family, that they may be said to be equally destructive as the worst of them. Notwithstanding all this, I am entirely resigned to my fate. I wrote to Mrs. A— informing her what an unanimous couple we are, and I doubt not but she will think it nothing more than a flight of fancy ; and therefore have turned the most serious things into ridicule, by way of amusement to her ; but believe me, dear Lady Smith, that what I have wrote here is entirely truth ; and I am sure there is nothing more in it than your own judgment of the world will make it very easy for you to suggest.

I conclude, dear Madam,

Your Ladyship's devoted humble servant,

S. WRONGHEAD.

LETTER XLVII.

LADY SMITH DAVAL TO MRS. WRONGHEAD.

YOU cannot complain, my dear friend, that you have not married a man with no variety in him, for your good spouse seems to be nothing else, and I wish he may not be, what is vulgarly called, crack'd brain'd, or what I call an ingenuous

nious madman ; for I find he has different kind of fits in order to answer his different purposes, and a mask so well adapted to his interest, that he can appear to be possessed of all those good qualities, that render mankind agreeable ; when, in reality, he is a stranger to every virtue that could make him desirable. Indeed I do not wonder you have got a husband of this sort, for the world abounds with them so much that a woman may think herself fortunate in escaping from them. And however men may pride themselves, on their great knowledge, school learning, business, or any art or science, which may serve to introduce them to the world as clever fellows, or possibly make them pass as very great wits, yet, were they thoroughly known they might be found little more than a set of well taught blockheads. For a man may have a great deal of genius about him who has very little wit, and there are a many people who are supposed to have a great deal of wit but who are very deficient in understanding, and few who can distinguish one from the other.

When we hear a man is very clever, we naturally conclude his understanding and judgment are indisputable ; but as happiness consists more in sound reason, than all the flights of high flown wit that ever filled the poets fancy, I shall endeavour to lay down some rules whereby we may discern a man of real understanding, from what is generally termed wit. For my part, whenever I am in company with a man who talks a great deal, I directly suppose he wishes to be thought a wit, and of course conclude he is not a man of judgment ; for the wit will be sure to start some subject whereby he may say something smart upon it, and that too, perhaps, a borrowed phrase ; whereas the man of judgment will always wait a proper opportunity for a reply, and never wish to shew his talents, but when they may shine with redoubled lustre ;

lustre; and what is a very great disadvantage to wits, they are often obliged to play off very much out of season. I have known some who have been obliged to attack their best friends rather than be disappointed of shewing their witty talents. These are misfortunes that never can happen to men of understanding who are enriched with sound judgment and discretion, and guided by pure reason. I always make this observation, that when a man is over fond of shewing his abilities, he directly convinces us of his want of them. Good sense is not always the portion of the great; and a rich fool is contemptible indeed! A man who has had every opportunity of improving himself, both from example and practice, there can be no excuse for his want of knowledge; and there are some beings in the world who come out of the first schools as great ignoramuses as they went in; for they are too haughty to learn, and too proud to be taught.

I fear, my dear Madam, you have got one of these *all-wise* beings; if so, 'tis in vain to think of his doing better in one place than another, for without he would change his uncommon disposition, the change of place will have but little effect. It is true, if his connections are bad, moving him may alter the scene, but, I fear, will never mend the man; for if neither money nor persuasion will keep him from exposing himself and family, there is but little hope of overcoming the evil by any other change than the non-existence of the man.

But I hope your own good sense, joined to an amiable disposition, will enable you to conduct yourself through life, in a manner becoming a much better situation than your unfortunate stars have placed you in; and remember the grand duty that is incumbent on us all, to him, who best knows what afflictions are most fitting to work out our everlasting good, and may you

never want for that to support you through all your troubles, is the ardent wish and prayer of

Your affectionate friend,

E. SMITH DAVAL.

LETTER XLVIII.

MRS. WRONGHEAD TO LADY SMITH DAVAL.

YOUR Ladyship has, in a few words, explained to me Mr. Wronghead's whole composition; and without knowing his person, exactly guessed the man; for he must certainly have taken leave of his senses, or he could not go on in the manner he does, for since he has had a little money he has become so very affronting to his friends, and behaved so unbecoming a man in business that the whole town now look upon him, not with that complaisance as aforetime, but with absolute contempt. He has told me he shall not stay here much longer; and you may very well suppose I shall not be sorry at leaving a place which has always been to me detestable. But you will say, perhaps, that as Mr. W— has been the sole cause of my uneasiness, I shall ever be under the same misfortunes, go where I will. That, indeed, will depend upon the connections I form; for believe me the inhabitants in general of this place are so consummate ignorant—and ignorance you know is the only cause to which we can attribute that great propensity people in general have for scandal—that they would sooner believe a tale from a madman, or the calumnious reports of a set of tattlers, than the plainest truths; therefore

fore Mr. W— is not fit to live in Hill Town; for his tongue is of so poisonous a nature, that in a place so ready to take any infectious matter of that kind, he ought to be shunned as much as the viper.

I assure you, Lady Smith,' I am fallen into very great disgrace here, and am looked upon by the whole town (to use their own expression) to be no better than I should be. For you must know, a certain gentleman has been seen to attend me home from the play more than once; and altho' he is very intimate with Mr. W— yet my judicious husband has given me orders not to suffer such liberty to be taken with me any more; and I find he was ridiculous enough to ask several of his acquaintance what they thought of my being at the play so often and having a young gentleman to come home with me; they told him by all means to put a stop to it; for nobody knew where it might end, and sent him home more like a fury then my husband. As soon as he came in, he stamped and tore about the house like a madman; kicked his wig about, calling me all the names he could think of; and told me at my peril to speak to Mr. B— no more, for if ever I went into his house again he would chop my legs off. I told him, very coolly, that I had never felt so great a desire to go to his house as at this moment; for now I had his orders to keep away, I had such an inclination to go, that in all probability I should find an opportunity, even at the hazard of my legs. We had a long altercation, in which he told me I should go out no more with a parcel of giddy girls, and if I would not be contented with two or three old ladies, I might go without company, for he would have no Miss L—'s nor Miss S—'s at his house as an excuse for a parcel of young fellows to come after me. I told him I was greatly obliged to him for the very high opinion he had of my fidelity.

He went out of the room in a great passion ; and I sent for a post chaise and went to my mother's, determined in my mind never to come to Hill Town again. I found myself so hurt when I reflected on the ill treatment I had received from him, and of his exposing me as he did, that I wrote him a letter demanding a separate maintenance ; but the next day he came, to my great disappointment, with the very person whom he had been so jealous of, informing me he was very sorry for what he had done, but that I might thank Miss L— for it ; for it was she bid him put a stop to my going out so much, which had induced him to behave in such a disrespectful manner. I told him, as I found him to be of such an unhappy turn of mind, as to suspect that every one that came to the house was come with an intent either to rob him, or run away with me, it would add greatly to my peace of mind to be parted from a man who had injured me so much ; and if I was obliged to return with him, I never should forget it.

At this declaration the poor man fell into tears, and made the whole house ring with lamentable moans declaring he could not live without me ; therefore to save his life, I am once more in Hill Town.

I am, your Ladyship's obedient servant.

S. WRONGHEAD.

LETTER XLIX.

MRS. WRONGHEAD TO MISS S. CATLANE.

I HAVE kept a little journal of the transactions of Mr. W—, and his partners, for these last six months, and think it will highly entertain you ; for he has had no less than four in that short time.

The

The first of these I shall call Mr. Bluster, a man of consummate arrogance, and well known on the coal exchange, for a person of more words than wisdom. The second was a dumb man, who passed for a conjurer, and Mr. W— set up in that business with him ; but finding, one day, they had raised more evil spirits, than they could well lay, the dumb gentleman was obliged to call forth the aid of speech, to defend himself; for which he was thrown into prison as an impostor, and poor Mr. W— was obliged to run away for fear of being tossed in a blanket. The next that Mr. W— was connected with, was Mr. Smiler, a man of some genius, and a lover of curiosities. This man would sacrifice his best friends, to the interest of a few vagrants, whom he supported for entertaining him with a scene of ribaldry : and his greatest pleasure was, to have a good name amongst those who could never be of any service to him. The next and last person Mr. W— wished to be in business with, was a man famous, as he said, for curing the gout ; but, poor man, he had the misfortune to be hanged before the articles of partnership could be signed, which happened very fortunately for Mr. W— or perhaps he might have suffered the same fate ; for you know, my dear sister, bad connections lead mankind into the worst of errors. Therefore may he give up all thoughts of partners without he had a greater knowledge of mankind, is the sincere wish of

Your affectionate sister,

S. WRONGHEAD.

O 3 L E T T E R

LETTER L.

LADY SMITH DAVAL TO MRS. WRONGHEAD.

JUST as I had sat down to inform you of the death of Mr. A—, I read your letter ; the contents of which gave me as much concern, as the decease of my worthy friend, who is but just stept off the stage before us, and will, according to his exemplary life, be received into everlasting glory, as a reward due to his many virtues while in this wicked world. Mrs. A— bears her loss with a becoming fortitude and resignation. He was interred last night, without any pomp or shew, according to his desire, and buried near Mr. Edwards, Mrs. A—'s first husband.

As Mrs. A— has been so happy in the married state I am sure she will not remain a widow long. Her son is married to a young lady at Woodbridge, a person of good fortune. I am surprized you refused his addresses, merely on account of his business, when at the same time you well know that Mrs. A—, if she is not unnatural, must leave him her fortune, and there was no reason to suppose she would have any more children to provide for, therefore young B— will have, at least, eight hundred a year. He is a good young man, and for you to disapprove of him because he is a shopkeeper, and your not likeing to be the wife of a man in a public busines; when, behold, a few weeks after, you married a man in a mechanical line ! and not only that, but with the incumbrance of two children, and a hundred other disadvantages ; for you to do this in preference to the other, is to me amazing, and I can never believe but you must have been possessed of some evil spirit.

I would

I would advise you to be parted from Mr. W— if you can ; for if you are not, the consequence will be, you will grow weary of life ; and not finding any happiness or satisfaction at home, you will, of course, be going out, which will be attended with a great expence ; and he will not fail of being jealous, knowing what a life he leads you ;— the consequence of which will be, he will neglect his busines in running after you. Thus you will loose all your younger days and your property with a man who ought to be confined in bedlam ; and be laughed at by those who now tell you it is your duty to live with him. For my part, whenever I hear people argue in this manner, I always beg of them to state the circumstances, according to the rules of common reason, and to lay aside all false doctrine, and ridiculous opinions. I do not mean to insinuate that a woman ought to be parted from her husband, on every little frivolous occasion ;—no ; a woman ought to remember that when she entered into the married state with him, it was for life ; and it is therefore her duty—a duty which she ought ever to hold inviolable—to do every thing which lays in her power to render each other happy : but when she is thus requited for all her affiduities to please, for all her anxious cares and perplexities on his account—I do then affirm she ought to be parted from him. If Mr. W— had any good qualities, any good sense in his composition, he would have scorned such meannesses, and spurned them from him as beneath the dignity of a man.

By what I can learn, you have not one sincere friend in Hill Town ; nor indeed is it to be wondered at ; for while Mr. W— thus runs about the town exposing himself and family, in the manner he does, you need not be surprised to see all your acquaintance come to you out of pure curiosity ; and it is ever the case, where a man is

bad

bad, the wife but rarely has a friend. Therefore, as you have no family, again I say, I would advise you to be parted from him, if possible: you know where to come; and I dare say you will not break your heart at leaving your false friends; they are to be found in every place.

I cannot but think your lord and master will be unwilling to part with you while he supposes there is money depending in the family; besides, I never knew a man in my life, who treated his wife ill without a cause, that would part with her by consent. But as Mr. W— takes things into his head, which no other man ever did, who knows but he may agree to sign and seal a deed for this purpose, which indeed would prove highly satisfactory to

Your sincere friend,

E. SMITH DAVAL.

LETTER LI.

MRS. WRONGHEAD TO MRS. A.—

I AM truly sensible, my dear Madam, what you must feel at the loss of so kind, so tender a husband, who well merited every encomium that can possibly be paid to his memory. Yet, we ought to consider the amiable qualities, which rendered him so dear to you and his friends, were but fitting him for eternal glory, in a world more pure, where he will be rewarded with everlasting peace and happiness; this points out a pleasing sensation to the soul, not to be described, especially when we look forward with those pleasing views, to that blessed day which is to unite us all with one

one fellowship in those blessed regions above, where he is waiting to welcome us.

I cannot help relating here a dream which I had a fortnight before I came to B— Hall. I thought I was married to a man of such excellent endowments of mind, and our conversation so sublime, that he seemed more than human. We had not been married long before this divine being died, and left me inconsolable for the loss ; I was not able to bear my excessive grief, and at length became so overpowered with it that I grew delirious, and was obliged to be confined in a dismal place, and in which those about me appeared as disagreeable as my situation. At length I became more composed, and was suffered to have more liberty. I thought I was walking alone ; ruminating upon, and painting to my imagination the many enchanting and happy hours I had passed with my deceased husband, when awaking from my dream, I saw him standing before me ; I eagerly ran to clasp him in my arms. But oh ! how inexpressible was my disappointment when I beheld him avoid my embraces !—but with a voice, sweet as the morning breeze that rises from the bed of violets, he thus addressed me—“ Forbear !—I am too sacred to be “ touched by mortal hands.—But, oh ! cease those “ tears, those chrystral sluices dry up, and stop thy “ excessive grief ; for, after numerous misfortunes, “ hardly to be equalled, we shall meet in that “ happy country, where thou and I shall never “ more part. Adieu ! farewell !” The blessed spirit instantly vanished, and I presently awoke. As I was then very young, I thought but little of this idle phantom of the brain ; but since I have experienced so much unhappiness both before and after I was married, it led me to suppose that such a dream might be productive of a very good effect, and serve to fortify the mind against too much dependence upon the happiness of this world.

The

The human mind is more susceptible of these impressions than some people are willing to imagine ; and were we but happy enough to meet with such objects as these, who would encourage and instruct us in these principles, instead of laying down a few mysterious rules to go by, we should soon find religion flourish, and hypocrites, the bane of all religions, struck off the list of christian society ; this would be a means of laying a good foundation for future ages. And I believe no place wants a reformation of this kind more than Hill Town ; particularly in a certain family, whose primitive goodness leads them about from place to place to hear new doctrines, and to confound truth with unbelief ; and so ignorant are they, to the real principles of religion and piety, that they have set up false notions, and made boast of their devotion, according to the outward form and ceremony of the system ; but in practice they will be utter strangers to it.. I know one particular gentleman so melted at a sermon preached by the Rev. Dr. F— whose text was, “ blessed are the peace makers,” that he cried the whole time ; yet, so callous was this tender gentleman’s heart by the time he got home, that he called his wife a lazy — (I cannot write the word it is such a horrid one) for not getting ready in time to go to church, and hear the sermon that had inspired him with such noble sentiments.

This is a kind of holiness I do not understand ; but it seems the people of this place are so accustomed to it, that they practice this mock kind of religion with a great deal of seeming zeal, and at the same time quarrel with those neighbours who do not follow the same inconsistent rules, however repugnant they may be to these principles ; nor will they be persuaded that they are as good christians as themselves, except they pursue the same improprieties.

These

These observations, my dear Madam, will shew you that I am yet what I ever was—An advocate not for the outward shew of religion only, but for the practical part of it also; and I make no doubt but those principles are they which support you under this heavy affliction, and it will, ere long, waft us to those happy regions, where our now immortal friend is gone before us.

S. WRONGHEAD.

LETTER LI.

MRS. WRONGHEAD TO MISS S. CATLANE.

I AM become quite a rake; and Miss C— and I went to D— assembly, and spent a very agreeable evening. Who should be there but Mr. Mildman; he made me a formal bow, and I returned it with an insignificant smile; he came up to me and spoke a few words, but as it was not a proper place for him to upbraid me in, for my foolishness, soon left me. Miss C— danced with Mr. F—, but I know not who I danced with; however I am certain he was no Lord, nor was he, I suppose, a gentleman, only for that night; as the Hill Town people looked upon me only a lady for that night; for I dare say some of my neighbours who were there thought I had better be at home keeping my husband's books.

Since this, I have been to a concert, and to the public breakfast in Hill Town, which has put them all in an uproar. I assure you a person ought to have a good countenance to stand the test

test of all the ill bred compliments which are paid to them on their first appearance. I find I was taken off for going, being a tradesman's wife; and I have taken them off too, for being at a place so much out of their sphere; till they have learnt good manners; indeed, Sukey, they need not envy me for the happiness I take in public places, for you may suppose I cannot enjoy them as I have done; for I cannot expect to be looked upon as I used to be, nor can I think of meeting with the same marks of good breeding from the new made gentry in this place, as I did with my dear Lady Smith Daval, and was I with that divine woman again, what happiness would it add to

Your affectionate sister,

S. WRONGHEAD.

N. B. I have inclosed a few lines on the death of young F—r.

ON THE DEATH OF DR. F—'S SON.

Behold the father, in excessive grief,
Weeps o'er his child, and humbly begs relief
From th' Almighty's hand, to spare his son;
Whose sickness threaten'd with a destin'd doom:
In eloquence of language, thus he spoke,
Words that would pierce the most obdurate rock;
Oh, death! with-hold thy hand; take not my boy;
Oh take the root, and not the branch destroy!
Forbear to wound him with thy ghastly hand,
Oh hear me death—obey my vile command:
Withdraw thy dart—with-hold the fatal blow,
But yield my child, a blessing for my woe:
I fear thy terrors, and tremendous will,
Hang o'er his head, and baffle all our skill:

Thou

Thou summon'd art, by heav'n, to call my son;
If 'tis thy will? thy holy will be done.

Celestial powers demand thy vital breath,
And leave a father to lament thy death.
Thy wretched father thus deplores in vain;—
Thou silent art—and silent must remain.
But time shall bring us to one endless fate,
Where sorrow ceaseth and all griefs abate:
There shall I meet thee, but to part no more,
To taste divine affection and adore
That great disposer, who decreed thy fate,
For ever glorious, and for ever great.

LETTER LIII.

LADY SMITH DAVAL TO MRS. WRONGHEAD.

CURIOSITY, that ever predominant passion in the female breast, led me to ask Mrs. A—to let me look at your last letter.

Indeed I should never have thought of it, had you not informed me you had sent her some hints respecting the happiness she might now enjoy, in a single state.

My little friend, I give you all the commendations and applause, that is due to your uncommon genius and spiritual endowments; yet, when you was writing to Mrs. A—you did not consider that she was *mortal*, and likewise *mortally* beset with passions, such as do not adhere to your sublime notions of things; but before you can deter her from thinking again of a husband, you must divest her of all corporeal senses, for I don't believe she means to be canonized as a saint upon earth, by

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giving up the works of the flesh ; for she embraces quite another doctrine, and says, that without it the world would soon sink into nothing. She has, therefore, set her cap at young S—. He is a fine young man, about two and twenty ; which is just the right age for a woman of fifty-four, and an estate of five hundred a year. I cannot but say she is a woman of courage, and I do believe it will be a match.

As you seem to have very liberal opinions of a state of future happiness, what think you in respect to Lord Smith Daval and me ? I am parted from him, perhaps never to see him more in this world ; yet I enjoy him so much in idea, and so strong are his endearments imprest upon my mind, that alive or dead I wish to be only his ; and believe me I would refuse every thing on earth for his dear sake. Such respect have I paid to his memory, that I have every hope to meet him hereafter never more to part ; and though I have every enjoyment I can wish for here, yet the bare thoughts of my dear Lord S— is more to me than all the riches I possess ; and freely would I give it all to hear his enchanting voice ; yet for some time past my mind has been so far exalted above this world ; that I have often wished not to see him till I could behold him a more perfect being. And oh, what rapture, what satisfaction, should I enjoy, to behold that generous soul, faultless and spotless as an angel pure !

I cannot help observing the difference between your good man's disposition and Lord Smith's ; for his Lordship lived but in my smiles, and for me to look serious in his presence was a crime not to be excused ; in short his greatest pleasure was to see a cheerful heart ; and ever attentive even to his servants happiness. Often have I heard him say that a melancholy man always put him in mind

mind of perdition, and that he would rather stand in the pillory than meet one; for he despised a coward, and every thing that had the appearance of one; for a melancholy person always appears frightened at themselves, therefore we are apt to put this ungenerous construction upon them.

I can't but admire what an unaccountable being Mr. W— is, who at one time is praising you for all that is good, at another time condemning you for all that is bad. He does not consider that the man, who, with an air of satisfaction, tells his wife she is all he wishes her, says more to the purpose than he who would fill a volume in her praises. Love is expressed in very few words; and shews itself more in looks, than in all the eloquence of speech. The tender heart conveys the sympathetic glance, whose efficacious power enlivens all the soul, and spreads the richest blessings o'er the lover's mind. These are the sentiments I would wish to convey to a certain gentleman, who is all talk, but very little meaning, and well known by the name of Mr. W—.

I remain your affectionate friend and servant,

E. SMITH DAVAL.

LETTER LIV.

MRS. WRONGHEAD TO LADY SMITH DAVAL.

WE are all confusion here, for there is a new raised regiment of inoffensives quartered in this town. I suppose to defend us from scandal,

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and one of the officers has run away with my sister. All I know of him is, that he is a very handsome young man, and of a good family. But what will add more to your surprise is, Mr. W— has left off business and let his house in Hill Town, while I was on a visit in the country, and he is determined to get a commission in this regiment if he can; so now I shall stile myself a pedlar of quality; for I suppose we shall travel about from place to place, sometimes we shall find a house to shelter our heads in, and at others be glad to put up with a barn. I leave every thing entirely to Mr. W— to do just as he pleases; for the thoughts of leaving Hill Town, and being near my dear sister, makes me the more agreeable to this change. And perhaps when Mr. W— comes to see more of the world his ideas may be more refined, and we may be more happy.

I have this moment received a letter from Mr. W—, who informs me, that he has given up all thoughts of being an officer, for the colonel tells him that the whole regiment objects to him. What their reasons are I know not, but I fancy it is because they are already overstocked with blockheads. It cannot be his birth nor his fortune they can object to; and as to his trade, they take of every kind, from a shoe-black to a wine merchant, for nothing higher, I suppose, would choose to join them.

I will now try, since he is disappointed of this scheme, and has left off business, to persuade him to purchase an annuity, or a place, or in short any thing he cannot make away with.

You wish, Lady S—, to have my opinion concerning the possibility of your meeting the object of your desires in another world: if you mean it as a full completion of your happiness, it makes it a very doubtful point to determine, because it seems to take

take away that glory which is only due to the Great Creator, who is the supreme essence of adoration and perfection, therefore can have no equal in respect to love. And rest assured, Lady S—, that whatever our happiness may be in the next world, there can be nothing wanting to add glory and perfection to all eternity. And may we both meet in those blessed regions, is the prayer of

Your affectionate,

S. WRONGHEAD.

LETTER LV.

MRS. C— TO MRS. WRONGHEAD.

WE are safe arrived, my dear sister, in Suffolk, where the regiment is quartered; and to make my happiness complete, I only wish for your company. I really am very sorry Mr. W— was disappointed in making one in our party, on your account, for we live very gay I assure you, and it would suit you better than me, as I never was fond of company.

Now you are in London, I make no doubt but you will soon form a more agreeable acquaintance than you had in the country; but that will depend entirely upon Mr. W—'s manner of conducting himself; for if he behaves as he did when at Hill Town, depend upon it no one will visit you long; therefore I would not have you set your mind on any thing of that kind; for tho' he appeared to be more agreeable while we were

with you than ever I had seen him, it might be, perhaps, only as a compliment to Captain G—, who was quite a stranger to him. But these changes for the better are so sudden, that I fear it will not hold long. Captain G— thinks, as the rest of the world does till they come to know him, that he is a very agreeable, sensible, man ; but what can induce him to break out in the manner he does sometimes, is, to me, a mystery ; and that he should be guilty of such conduct, no one can believe till they see it. Sometimes I cannot but think it a kind of madness, and that he cannot help it—if so, it is very hard you and the family should suffer from his mad tricks, while the world thinks him in his proper senses. But while you can put on such a mask of happiness, every one is ready to believe you both go hand in hand, in all the inconsistent schemes which come into his head. The people in Hill Town told me that Mr. W— said you persuaded him to go into the military line ; I told them not to believe all he said, for you was on a visit in the country and knew nothing of it, till he sent you word he had retired from business and had let the house and had got the promise of a commission in the army ; they seemed surprised at this, and I suppose would not believe it because it was the truth.

I hope the London air will clarify his head, and purge his heart from all hypocrisy ; this is the sincere wish of all *your* friends, and *his* I suppose would not be sorry to hear it ; though there does not appear to be much affection reigning in the family ; indeed their ideas are too gross for that amiable quality.

Captain G— begs we may have the pleasure of your company while we are by the sea side ; and as you are fond of bathing you may have a good dip : there is much genteel company here
enjoying

enjoying this sport, and if you will join them it will add greatly to the happiness of

Your affectionate sister,

SUKEY G—s.

LETTER LVI.

MRS. WRONGHEAD TO LADY SMITH DAVAL.

OUR residence is now in London; we have taken lodgings near a relation of Mr. W—'s, who promises to serve him in every thing in his power. He appears a man of character, and I am told he is famous for a great share of understanding; but as I had rather find a man possessed of a good heart, than a bright head, I shall suspend my judgment on that subject for the present.

I am extremely happy, my dear Madam, to inform you, that—from what I can learn of Captain G—, he appears to be the only man in the world that could have made my sister happy; and believe me, without there is some unity in the dispositions of those who enter into the married state, the vilest slavery is far superior to it; for it is absolutely insupportable, to be always obliged to do every thing in direct opposition to our own sentiments and principles. And oh, what a situation must that man's be, who, through ignorance or folly, will not believe the truth, because it corresponds not with his own depraved imagination. Such is the fate of him, who

who from a perverse disposition, does every thing diametrically opposite to reason and common sense. May my dear sister find no such a being in her good man.

Since I came to London I have been much happier than in Hill Town; how long it may continue, I know not; but I suppose when Mr. W— gets to scheming again it will be all over with us. However I am determined to make myself as happy as I can. 'Tis in vain to quarrel with fate: we may lighten the load of misery by endeavouring to bear it well.

I remain yours with much esteem,

S. WRONGHEAD.

LETTER LVII.

LADY SMITH DAVAL TO MRS. WRONGHEAD.

I RECEIVED the highest satisfaction, at your being so much more agreeably situated, than when at Hill Town. May your happiness increase—and may those friends, whom you seem to put such confidence in, be found worthy your esteem. But that you can never know till you come to want their assistance. So it was I found out mine: they were all wanting in their professions, but the good Samaritan; and had it not been for him, I might have starved before any of the rest would have taken any trouble to have found out what was become of me; but as soon as I had my fortune left me, I then was worth seeking

seeking for, and was soon found out by all whom I now treat according to their merit. I often tell Sir John R— if his friendly visits are with any mercenary views, he might save himself a great deal of trouble, as I mean at my death to give all my estate my uncle left me to the poor for ever. This, I know, is like a dagger in his breast.

I was very much pleased with your sentiments, in answer to the happiness we may possibly enjoy with our near and dearest friends, in another world; and at the same time I have taken your very instructing hint, in respect to that Omnipotent Being, who has a right to be first in adoration; and in all love and honour he can have no equal. But I hope I have not loved Lord Smith with so much affection, as to alienate any part of them from that Supreme Being, whose mercies to me have been as great as his own incomprehensibility. I assure you I have not set my heart entirely upon the things of this world; for I can, with a great deal of pleasure, fancy to myself, that if I could but hear my once beloved master call me to join him in the regions above, with what transports of joy should I fly to obey him; there with him to sing everlasting hallelujahs to that all-gracious, merciful, bountiful Creator, for his great goodness in bringing such unworthy beings to glory and immortality. These delightful imaginations, my friend, fill my heart with raptures not to be expressed.

You may possibly be surprised at my being so enraptured with, and retaining so great a regard for a man, who not only appeared false, but cruel to leave me in the manner he did: but I freely pardon that worst part of his character; for I well know his noble soul could not have seen so dear a part of him sink into such an ebb of

of misery; for while I was with him, I had no reason to suppose but I was the object of his esteem; and while he had a fortune, it was always most profusely bestowed upon me. With what freedom did he suffer me to enjoy life! and lived himself but in seeing me admired: and such confidence had he placed in me, that it was out of the power of any one to deceive him; and all this unprecedented goodness of his Lordship towards me, induces me, in gratitude, to pay an everlasting tribute to his memory.

I have some thoughts of going over to France; and if I should be so fortunate as to find him, you shall have the pleasure of seeing the summit of my happiness.

I must inform you that Mrs. A— is married to a Mr. Stanhope, at which, I suppose, you will not be less surprised than

Your ever affectionate friend,

E. SMITH DAVAL.

LETTER LVIII.

MRS. WRONGHEAD TO LADY SMITH DAVAL.

ALL prospects of happiness for me are over! Mr. W— has been disappointed by several of his friends who promised to serve him; therefore we are going to move from this lodging, for he is determined to go into some line of business; but what, and where it is to be, I know

know not. I am determined not to object to whatever scheme he may form; for if I do, his friends will be sure to impute it to a foolish pride in me. As to his property, that I find is irretrievably condemned; so that there is not a day passes, but I hear of something new started which he means to try at; I advise him to make the best of what he has got, and live upon it, rather than spend it in trade to a much greater disadvantage; for he has always done so since I knew him; and though he seems sensible of this, yet he is still determined to be his own ruin, in venturing in the same road. I am foolish enough to suppose that he was pre-ordained to be of that contradictory composition, and that it is impossible for him to do any thing that might turn out to his advantage,

I should be happy if your Ladyship would give me a better definition than this; for I am at a loss how to account for a man, who one day appears a rational being, and the very next, seems to be deprived of every spark of reason and rationality. Yet, strange as it may appear, I cannot but believe it is natural to him; for no one can express more sorrow than he does, when he sees his ill conduct: but, alas! no sooner is this fit of repentance over, than he again errs with redoubled vengeance, bids defiance to every admonition, and courts his own destruction.

You will say, perhaps, this is an artificial kind of repentance which rather serves but to aggravate the crime, than alleviate it. Indeed I begin to dread his repenting as much as his erring, for with him both seem to answer the same end.

He now wishes for his garden at Hill Town; when he had it he thought it of no value; it seems he wanted the pleasure of wishing for it, before he could any ways enjoy it. I compare a man of his disposition to the boundless ocean, which

which is always filling, yet never satisfied; and had he the whole world in his possession, still he would be continually athirst till he discovered others; like the insatiable Wolsey, whose thirst after ambition was so great that it at length ruined him. Let me say then to Mr. W—, what Wolsey did to Cromwell after his fall, “ I charge thee,” said he, “ throw away ambition; for by that sin fell the angels; how shall man then thro’ the image of his maker, “ hope to win by it?” I cannot but pity mankind when I see them of such an unfortunate turn of mind; yet a great deal may be said in favour of these unhappy objects, though I, who am so much injured in the cause, am by no means a proper judge to determine on his side; but I cannot think it possible for a man to be his own enemy wilfully.

I do not wonder at your attachment to Lord S—; for I often think there appeared to me to be a kind of magnet in his composition, which soon found a way to your Ladyship’s heart, which being so powerfully attractive, draws him to you to all eternity; and according to your wishes may it be so.

I remain yours truly,

S. WRONGHEAD.

LETTER

LETTER LIX.

MRS. STANHOPE TO MRS. WRONGHEAD.

DO not be alarmed, my dear friend, at this being sealed with black; without keeping you in painful uncertainty, I will come to the point at once.—Our amiable friend, Lady Smith Daval, is, alas! no more. She was taken on Monday last with a strong fit, which deprived her of sense and motion; in this state she continued some hours, when fetching a gentle sigh, she expired without a groan. Thus departed that purest, that best of women; and you have, indeed, lost a friend in every sense of the word: and I believe no person's death was ever more regretted. I hear Sir John R— and his Lady are inconsolable; but none bears the loss so composed as her mother, who says she is sure she is in heaven if there is such a place, and tells Lady R— not to grieve, for we must all follow sooner or later. This is her way of soothing; and though it may appear rather unnatural, I dare say she is not the less sorry, notwithstanding this strange way of expressing herself.

I find Lady S— left a will, which was made soon after she came to her uncle's estate; and has given the whole of it to a Doctor H—, but on these conditions, that if Lord Smith Daval should ever return to England, the Doctor is then to allow Lord S— five hundred a year for life; and her old servant Ann to have fifty pounds a year allowed her for her life. But who this Doctor H— is, I cannot conceive; but I am certain she intended to alter

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her

her will in favour of her mother ; for in her pocket book was found a memorandum of instructions to her attorney to that effect ; however as she has not disposed of her furniture, nor the house she lived in, that will fall to the share of Sir John R— who will let Mrs. Wing enjoy it for her life, which will be as good as a hundred a year.

I asked Mrs. W— the last time I saw her, why she did not favour Lady Smith Daval in her request, and why she did not live with her ; she replied, “ not for the world, for that devil “ of a Lord will be back again if he hears of “ my daughter’s good fortune : and I cannot “ bear to see the wretch, who could leave her “ in the manner he did. And when I only go “ to pay her a visit, I am always in fear of “ his coming whenever I hear the bell ring ; “ and yet she is such a fool,” continued she, “ that she loves him, and I know is not happy “ without him.” Indeed I believe she was right, for Lady Smith always expressed an uncommon attachment to her husband ; and not without reason, for he really was the most accomplished man I ever saw, and paid the greatest attention to his wife without making himself appear ridiculous ; in short he was so engaging, that I heard Lady Bridget L— say there was not his equal in the world in the art of pleasing.

I have only given you a short account in this of the particulars, but shall be able to give you a better in my next. The general confusion which reigns at Dennington Place is beyond description ; Mr. S— came thro’ the village this morning, and he tells me he really believes that had Lady Smith lived much longer, she would certainly have had divine worship paid

to

to her; for the people seem to think it impossible to say enough in her praise, and that there is nothing but lamentations and mournings for her.

I well know you will be sensibly affected at this melancholy news, particularly on account of the attachment between you and her Ladyship; and never did she mention your name but with the highest esteem and respect; and I have often heard her say, if half her fortune could buy you out of the chains of wedlock, she would give it with pleasure; but, alas! dear as she was to us all, we are obliged to resign her to him, who only can, and will reward her according to her worth.

I am still your faithful,

M. STANHOPE.

LETTER LX.

MRS. WRONGHEAD TO MRS. STANHOPE.

I AM not insensible of the loss I have sustained by the death of that incomparable woman Lady Smith Dava; nor can time ever erase from my memory the friendship which subsisted between us. Blessed woman! I think I see her—speak to her—hear her; then pause a little, and my bewildered fancy whispers she is no more: I shudder at the thought. My spirits sink within me, and my very frame be-

comes inanimate. When I attempt to pour out my soul in praise to her blessed memory, I am at a loss for words to express the gratitude I owe to so generous, so good a creature. Alas! what shall I say? how shall I recount the matchless virtues of her heart? O thou in thyself most blessed while on earth! thou paragon of excellence! whose greatness of soul shone far beyond what my contracted views can possibly comprehend! thou, O bright spirit of perfection, wert the essence of gratitude—the mother of affection—the grand parent of friendship!—In thee were centered every moral excellence; and in thy blessed smiles the afflicted ceased to mourn; thou wert as a mother to the motherless; and hearest and relieved the orphans cries. Oh! if thou canst see me from thy blest abode, look down upon me; thou knowest that there is no blessing I wish for more, than to be possessed of that fortitude thou instilledst into my mind, while my heart was capable of the most tender impressions. Oh! now I feel thy sacred words as if riveted to my very soul; and the more I think on thee the more I deplore thy loss. Oh, why did I ever know thee? why did I ever know what disinterested friendship was? and oh! why was I blessed with a taste of that heavenly gift, which I can never find in any breast, now thou art gone. Alas! now I must look on friendship as a busy, meddling phantom; which hovers round me in numberless shapes; but, “ like a transitory meteor, soon dissolves “ in air.” What then must I expect to find it, if, when thou wert an inhabitant on this vile earth, thou foundest it thus.

Pardon me, dear Mrs. S.—, for this deviation; for few people knew her real value so justly

justly as myself, and few have so much cause to lament her death. In justice to her memory, I must inform you who this Doctor H— is, and how much he was entitled to her esteem. He was formerly physician to Lord Smith Daval; and when Lady S— was in her late distressed situation without a foul to assist her, destitute of every comfort, and even the common necessaries of life, he was her only friend. Her distress and anxiety brought on a very bad fever; at that time that good servant, Ann, whom her Ladyship has so liberally rewarded in her will, calling to see her, found her in that deplorable situation; she instantly went, undesired and unknown to her mistress, and called in Doctor H— to her assistance. He came—but not as a man of the world—but as a man of feeling, who looked down with an eye of benignity and compassion upon so much goodness in distress. He therefore took care that Lady S— should not want for any thing becoming the dignity of so excellent a woman. This good man, with a soul great as her own, supported her, when every other friend forsook her. This is that Doctor H—, and no one has a juster claim to her fortune, and she has rewarded him with it, for she was a lover of justice: and her memory will ever be dear to

Your sincere friend,

S. WRONGHEAD.

LETTER

LETTER LXI.

MRS. WRONGHEAD TO MRS. G—.

HOW shall I find words, my dear sister, to express to you my grief at a letter I received from Mrs. S—, the contents of which was, the death of that divine woman, Lady Smith Daval. In her, I have lost a friend indeed. She was the only woman who appeared to me to have a heart.— I mean a heart so richly formed for doing good. O how different was she to the generality of our sex ! who are pleased without a meaning, and displeased without a reason. So fickle and so various, that we serve but to make up that insignificant part of the species, which may be called a wonderful production of fiction, false wit, and deceit ; and are strangers to those noble sentiments of benevolence and justice.

I cannot forbear relating a circumstance which happened while I was on a visit at Lady Smith's ; which will lead you to conclude she was a woman possessed of such a greatness of soul, as ordinary minds cannot comprehend. It was her usual custom, and had also been of her father, to invite a number of poor people to dine every Sunday ; and always made a point of going to speak to them before she went to church. Remarking one Sunday that one of the women was very dirty, she took occasion to hint it to her neighbours, who soon informed her what Lady S— said. The woman, very ignorant, thought herself highly offended, and cursed her Ladyship's pride, and all the bounties she had received from her, and vowed she should

should find fault with her no more ; nor could she be persuaded to go. Some time after this had happened, Lady S— enquired the cause of this woman's absence, and was told by the footman what had passed, adding, she was an ungrateful woman, for tho' she was almost starving, she refused to come for a dinner, or any other support from her Ladyship, and therefore deserved to know the want of such a friend. As to that, replied that all-gracious woman, give me leave to judge in such a case, if you please : the poor woman had as much right to speak her mind, when she thought she was slighted, as I had to give her a dinner, or any other thing I thought proper ; therefore I shall not withdraw my favours, nor be dictated to in any thing so foreign to my inclination. Oh, Catlane ! said she to me, what sweet, what delightful pleasure there is in giving ! An act of beneficence is doubly blessed—It blesseth those who give and those who receive. I am really hurt, continued she, to think the poor woman should suppose me to be guilty of an insult respecting her poverty.

My dear sister, she was every thing a woman might wish to be, and what few can ever attain. Indeed I can never forget her unspotted name. Such a friend may be likened to a comet, which makes its appearance but once in an hundred years, and strikes the world with wonder.

I have had some thoughts of communicating these letters to the world, that her example might be a noble pattern for our sex ; and I could wish it might deter young ladies from entering too precipitately into the married state ; for however ridiculous these admonitions may appear to those who are either too wise to be taught or think themselves too judicious to do wrong, I will engage

engage there is not one happy couple in a thousand, who are not well acquainted with each others dispositions before they are united together in that unchangeable state of matrimony. It is, therefore, a duty incumbent upon every parent, to be more particular in suiting the dispositions than the fortunes of their children, for upon those principles their whole happiness or misery depends ; and however happy a woman may appear with a man foreign in every respect to her own inclinations and sentiments, depend upon it she wears but a mark to hide the real feelings of her afflicted heart.

S. WRONGHEAD.

LETTER LXII.

MRS. G— TO MRS. WRONGHEAD.

CERTAINLY you have paid every respect to Lady Smith Daval's memory that can possibly be expressed in words ; and it appears there was a sympathy of soul or there could not have been such unity in affections, as such is very rarely to be found. Tis no wonder you are so much affected at the loss of so dear a friend.

We expect a rout to come every day. In our march I mean to call upon Mrs. S—, and see her young husband. She really is a monopolizer of husbands ; and so excessively fond of them, that we might suppose she killed them with kindness. I believe she will take care not

to

to kill herself with grief for the best, while she can help herself to another.

I am sorry to inform you Mrs. Friendly is married to Mr. B—, who treats her very ill ; for which reason she has declined corresponding even with her best friends. I called upon her not long since, and found her with every mark of discontent seated upon her mind that could possibly appear in the human frame. She made every apology in her power for not writing to you : but I must think her unhappy situation is a sufficient excuse. Oh, Sally ! how much I pity that dear woman ! She who was once possest of every thing that could render life desirable, and of the full power to enjoy it, is now called to an account for every thing she does, by a man who is little above the brute creation, and I believe in some respects much below them. Oh heavens ! how it hurts me to see that generous woman involved in irrevocable misery, by entering a second time into that state which divests us of our liberty, never to be regained. With what pleasure did Mrs. B— speak of the happy hours she had passed with us at Cambles End, and seem most heartily to repent leaving that place for a husband. But vain is that repentance which comes too late.

I find you are very satyrical upon the ladies ; and they mean to return you their public thanks for pronouncing them to have no hearts. If you had said we have no souls, most of us might have thought it a very happy circumstance : for sinking into nothing is a pleasure compared with being looked on as nothing ; and I am sure you have made us out to be worse than nothing ; and those who do not know your

your goodness of heart, might suppose you a bitter enemy to your own sex; but I think your intention may be to instruct us to look more into our hearts and less, in the mirror; then might we find with what justice we deserve to be censured. I could wish to be informed whether you mean to rank us with the human species, or whether you think us more of the serpentine gender, and therefore mean to rank us with those venomous creatures. If so, remember I am

Your affectionate sister,

S. G.

LETTER LXIV.

MRS. WRONGHEAD TO MRS. G—.

BEING obliged to go into Suffolk upon particular business, I called upon Mrs. S—. Indeed she is a happy woman: young S— makes an excellent husband, and she looks no older than she did ten years ago. She wished me to stay the summer with her, but that was not in my power; and believe me I thought so much of that divine woman, Lady Smith Daval, all the time I was in B—ham, that it deprived me of all the happiness I expected to enjoy from my visits, for that amiable woman is still fresh.

fresh in every person's memory; and I find Dr. H— continues the same charities as her Ladyship, out of respect to her unbounded generosity to him; and this is a convincing proof that he had all that nobleness of soul for which Lady S— so much admired him.

I pity my worthy friend Mrs. B—, from my heart: and since troubles in the married state seem to be ordained for her, I wish to hear she may never want for the same fortitude which has supported me through a variety of misery, such as I believe no other woman ever experienced, yet my troubles have answered every good purpose; they have taught me to look upon this world with contempt; as such, I see people in a different light to those who judge from inexperience and a self-conceited knowledge, which leads them to suppose they know a great deal, when in reality they know but very little. And I often look with an eye of pity on those narrow-minded souls who appear to enjoy all the blessings of this life, yet are strangers to that real satisfaction which I have enjoyed even in my greatest distress; for why should he repine at the want of a piece of bread, who has no evil conscience to stare him in the face, and to tell him he only wants that which he denied to others, as a due reward for his deeds. I, who have made so many people happy with my bounty, can have nothing of that sort to charge my memory with; therefore humble as my situation may appear in the eyes of the world, and whatever my friends or enemies may think in respect to circumstances or conduct, I will challenge the most perfect of them with these words;

In every comfort you may me excell,

But take my place, and learn to do as well.

Indeed

Indeed I have seen enough of this world to know that a greatness of mind, joined to an independence on things in this life, is the only thing that can make us happy; particularly when we fall into misfortunes; for that is the grand trial, and soon discovers a wise man from a fool, and is a sure way of putting a bad conscience to the test; for I never knew a bad man who did not sink lower with the weight of a depraved mind than all the evils of this life could produce; and Seneca tells us, to see a virtuous man struggling with misfortunes is a sight the Gods might look down upon with pleasure; but I shall farther add, to see a virtuous woman loaded with infamy unmerited, smile at dire Oppression's heavy hand, is a sight the Gods behold with wonder and astonishment; and whatever great authors may advance concerning the mean comprehension of our sex, I am perswaded we only err for want of being better taught, which is the opinion of

Your affectionate friend,

S. WRONGHEAD.

LETTER

LETTER LXIV.

MRS. WRONGHEAD TO MRS. A.—

A BRAVE mind can never be distressed long; for though misfortunes seem to attack me on every side, yet Hope encourages me to look forward with a pleasing view of seeing better days. When I count over the many changes in my life, I can scarcely think it possible for me to be the same person I was a few years since. I was then in plenty, and prosperity shone at my door, and flattery wanted no courting to be one of my guests. Thus time滑ly on till misfortunes appeared; which changed the scene in a moment, and pointed out the uncertainty of human greatness, and of wordly friends. Indeed I scarcely believe there is such a thing to be found; for I am ready to suppose that all the good that ever was or ever will be conferred from one person to another happens more by chance than any other motive, or why do we see the most abandoned characters, who are strangers to every good quality, meet with more favours than other people. Thus we see falling vice raised and supported while real merit and goodness is lingering out a wretched life in poverty and disgrace. You may smile at the idea of chance; but for my part I fancy every man acts in conjunction with chance, whose life and conduct is not guided by reason; as such, I fear, most

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most men will find the best part of their time has been spent in a manner that will convince them that if chance had not directed them, reason has had very little influence over their actions; and the wisest man in the world is not able to account for himself at all times, therefore no wonder ignorance is always in the wrong, without chance sets them right.

I am just returned from the country, where I had the pleasure of seeing Mr. Wronghead's daughter. She is at boarding school. I mean to take her to London soon. She is a fine girl, and will be an excellent companion for me; particularly as her brother is going to leave us. His determination is to be in the navy, therefore I am obliged to consent to his going to sea though I confess I am unhappy at parting from him; for whatever the world may be pleased to think in respect to the impossibility of a step mother's affection towards the children which are not her own, I deny it, and can prove that my affection for them has been tried not by words only, but in deeds such as will stand the test of time; and I am happy to inform you my worst enemies have not had it in their power to condemn my conduct in that respect, which adds the highest satisfaction to

Your affectionate friend,

S. WRONGHEAD.

LETTER

LETTER LXV.

MRS. WRONGHEAD TO MRS. G.—.

TO convince you that I am not grown a general abuser of the people in this place, Mr. Wronghead is acquainted with two gentlemen who I very much esteem; the one is famous for his learning, the other for his humanity and benevolence. I give the preference to the latter, though I am not so intimate with him as the former, who is the drollest character that ever existed; and so full of Hebrew, Greek and Latin, that if he sits down to play a hand of cards he is sure to take a book out of his pocket and mutter over a few passages while the cards are dealing; and from his great attention to his books he often makes very laughable mistakes; for I remember on asking him who was to play first, he replied Homer; not long after a Lady asked him if he chose to shuffle, he said he never read novels, he hated them; and I have heard he was once at a nobleman's house to dinner, and hearing the servants pretty loud though at a great distance, he called out in a great passion whip them boys, and really thought he had been in his own school, which made the company very merry; for his is a kind of pleasing forgetfulness, and as he is allowed to be a man of very great abilities it passes off very well, for he is an excellent companion.

It gives me great pleasure to hear by a friend that you are endued with that incomparable judgment for so young a married lady as to have found out already how to manage Mr. G— as you please. I admire your skill, but cannot forbear smiling at your vanity for the pretty modest excuse you make for shewing your temper by way of trying his. It is undoubtedly a very judicious maxim; and though I confess I could never wish to try the experiment upon the man I loved, yet if no other way will agree with the colonel's constitution so well, pray let him have it; and my dear sister you will be right or wrong according to the effect it takes. You know I am fond of few words in discord; but what I do say I mean, and wish them to be rightly understood. Such is my disposition, I would sooner forgive a man for making away with my fortune than forgive him for treating me in a language which conveyed the least indignity to my sex. As such I take great care not to give any provocation for that kind of usage. May you agree with my sentiments, is the sincere wish of

Your affectionate sister,

S. WRONGHEAD.

L E T T E R

LETTER LXVI.

MRS. WRONGHEAD TO YOUNG W—.

AS you are now entering into the world at large as we call it, now is the most critical time in your life; for whatever right or wrong judgment you form to yourself in respect to the various circumstances that may happen in this world, depend in a great measure upon the rules we lay down to ourselves when we first enter upon it; and a young man had better be born without reason, than not know how to make use of it. As such, you are in a line of life where you will often be with your superiors; and as it is the common pride of young people to try to copy great men, I could wish you to make one observation, that is, to learn to know what true greatness is; for I am sorry to say, that is seldom to be found amongst those whom the world call great; for a badge of honour ill becomes that man's breast who ought to have a brand of infamy in his hand; therefore I would advise you to pay that respect which is due to all great men, but to value no man only for his greatness of mind; if you do, you will build your hopes on a weak foundation, and will find yourself deceived every day.

Who can expect a kindness from a man whose very voice echoes insults to the distressed. Yet so infatuated is mankind in this particular, that a great man's promise would lead them about

about like some fawning partisan to be scourged as their pretended friends think proper. My dear John, let this be your motto—win gold and wear it. Let it shine with the lustre of your own merit; which will add more real satisfaction to your mind than the riches of Hastings. I know not what effect the salt water may have had upon you, but while on land I never knew you to be guilty of a mean action, nor were you ever encouraged by me to do any thing of the kind; for though I have been very unfortunate in life, yet I am certain I could not have been supported through the difficulties I have met with, but by being well assured that I had done every thing in my power to promote your father's interest and happiness. But when I found it was impossible to unbend his mind from those mean contracted ideas that seemed so habitual to him, I then made it my whole study to inculcate such liberal notions into your mind, which I hope will never be erased from your memory.

You will understand what I mean by these instructions, for I do not mean to insinuate that liberality which carries an imprudence in it; for the man who is more bountiful than he can afford is not only imprudent but unjust; for he who will hurt himself will seldom spare any body else, therefore ought not to be trusted; but I mean that nobleness of soul which induces a man to do every thing according to his ability, and makes him scorn a mean action either in word or deed, which is the perfection of man. And the only general rule that can be laid down for any person to go by is this, first to be well acquainted with your own disposition, and to get such a thorough knowledge

ledge of yourself that you may not be looked upon as one of those inconsistent beings who seem to act more by witchcraft than reason; and believe me, though you seem to think your father's unhappy situation may have been a great disadvantage to you, I flatter myself that it may have a very different effect; for as it had defeated every dependence you had upon him, you must now try with your most earnest endeavours to do that for yourself which your friends have not in their power to do for you; and I make no doubt but a constant attention and reverence to those above you, and a desire to please those beneath you will in time bring you to the summit of your desires, which is the sincere wish of

Your ever affectionate friend,

S. WRONGHEAD.

LETTER LXVII.

MISS WRONGHEAD TO MRS. WRONGHEAD.

WARMED with the highest esteem of gratitude and affection, let me return you that duty which I could not but have owed to you had I been your own child; as I am certain no parental care could have lain me under stronger obligations; since you have supported me

me not only disinterestedly, but even to your own ruin and disadvantage, when those who ought to have done it have not only violated the most sacred ties of nature, but have voluntarily endeavoured to put it out of your power to look down upon my dear brother and me with that satisfaction your noble heart could wish. And believe me, whenever I meet the dear boy, tis with prayers and tears we hold a consultation, and beg for prosperity more to promote your happiness than our own. Young as we are, we are well convinced we never had a friend but you, though in prosperity many professed it, and I make no doubt but they would again, were we in a situation not to want. But believe me I have sense enough to see the world as it really is, and am well assured those who are forsaken by a husband or a father, though ever so unjustly, will never find a friend; nor do I believe that any person of real merit ever did, nor will I till I have a more convincing proof of it than I ever had yet. Dear mother I often smile at the ridiculous excuses our relations, and those who used to stile themselves friends, make in treating my brother and me with disrespect on account of my father's imprudence. It shows the depravity of their understandings, and must be the effect of either very contracted ideas, or the product of a very bad heart; for if you had not treated us with more justice, we must have been begging in the streets before now: yet I suppose our pretended friends would take it very ill was any person to tell them they are destitute of benevolence; though in their hearts they are strangers to the very meaning of the word, as I have already experienced; and I shall never forget to return you

you my most dutiful thanks for instructing and preparing my mind to receive the frowns of the world before they came. Had my unhappy father taken the same admonitions, we should have wanted no friend: but then we might have gone off with the silly notion that such a thing was to be found. But since I find you have never met with one who had the highest right to claim it as a reward due to your own merit, who was never asked to do a kindness for any one, and refused; therefore, my dear mother, though your real goodness is hid from the poor blinded and deluded creatures of this world, be assured it will ere long be made known in that far more glorious world where you will not be rewarded the less for having it so unfortunately put out of your power to do as you could wish. But you will have the praises of heaven for your all-bountiful goodness to me and my dear brother, to all eternity; which is the assured belief of

Your most affectionate daughter,

A. WRONGHEAD.

LETTER

LETTER LXVIII.

MRS. WRONGHEAD TO MISS ANN W—.

I Received your very affectionate Letter; and it gives me the highest satisfaction to find you are well convinced that I have always had your interest at heart; and though the world seems unwilling even to allow me that small merit, yet I have defeated every design which could possibly reflect upon that part of my conduct. Indeed in this respect I have never acted with a view to please the world, but from the dictates of my own heart, a foundation which is not to be destroyed, and I flatter myself that the strict attention I have paid to your morals will not only be productive of your happiness here, but also redound to your eternal felicity hereafter; and whatever troubles and disappointments we may meet with in this life, we ought to reconcile it by this grand rule, that if we bring not those misfortunes upon ourselves by our own misconduct, depend they are sent to anwer some great end, as he who sent them cannot err, or dispose our fate improperly; this serves to waft us through difficulties unperceived, it enricheth us with fortitude, and is the fountain from which all our happiness springs. And be assured however prosperity may seem to raise some people above themselves, it seldom yields that happiness to the minds of those who possess it, as we are weak enough to suppose, for prosperity appears not without a train of attendants, such as pride, arrogance, self-conceit, and the

the most presumptuous folly, which shine very conspicuously in the person whose lot it is to be great before they have learned to be wise, for it requires more than a common understanding to keep those predominant passions in due subjection; for which reason we often see men who rise more by chance than merit, so insufferably overbearing that they destroy their own happiness by incurring that disgust and contempt which their situation ought to have set them so much above. Therefore adversity may be often sent to heal the wound prosperity has made. I have suffered the ill effects from a circumstance of this kind, therefore write from experience, being well assured there is some dispositions in the world that are very apt to repine at the humble situation in life which they are placed in, though at the very time are concious to themselves that it is the greatest blessing kind Heaven could bestow. Dear Ann, I shall conclude my letter with a few lines which I think applicable to this epistle.

Deluded man, forbear to wish in vain,
 Thy wish is granted, but you'll still complain,
 At thy request prosperity appear,
 But for thy folly, thou shal't pay severe.

From your's affectionately,

S. W.

LETTER

LETTER LXIX.

MRS. WRONGHEAD TO MRS. G—.

YOU may expect to see me in the country soon, as I have Mr. Wronghead's consent to go where I please. Therefore I mean to visit dear B—ham, that once happy place ; for I have never thought myself at home since I left it, though I have resided at near a hundred places in less than ten years. You may think by this time I ought to be settled somewhere. Indeed I wish it from my heart ; but fate has so decreed it, that I find without bid an everlasting farewell to being dragged about from place to place in search of that which I know is impossible to find, I must still remain dependent upon nothing but idle hopes of amendment in him who I fear can never be mended ; therefore I sincerely beg for that resolution and fortitude which in some respects I have never wanted, yet in this grand point have always fell short of enough to divest myself of the insults and misery which I have long experienced from a man whose ingratitude for what I have done for his family ought to have returned it with every mark of esteem. Yet I am sorry to say, that duty on my part serves but to constitute his ruin ; for his dependance upon my bounty, leads him to take every advantage ; and he is weak enough to suppose there will be no end to my property. As such I mean to take my friends advice, and escape the evil by flying from it ; for when every method has been tried to reclaim a man and convince him of his folly, without taking the

the least effect, I must then think it but madness, and like reasoning with the winds, to expect reforming that which is not to be reformed. Yet I find myself inclined to think that such unhappy beings claim our pity; for is it consistent with a rational being to be daily courting his own destruction? No; rather let it be said he knows not what he does. Therefore I freely forgive the man who has thus injured me, by depriving me of all earthly happiness; as I am well convinced he has indiscreetly made choice of means without considering either the effects or the consequences, and has fallen a sacrifice to his own follies, more from a depravity of mind, than from a badness of heart. As such, in defiance of every admonition I have had to the contrary, I shall always think that if Mr. W— could be transformed into a rational being, I must then look upon it as a duty incumbent upon me to return to my lord and master, and receive him as the father did the prodigal son. But why do I not wish for the sun to stand still, or the waves of the sea to be at rest. They would obey me as soon. Therefore I am destitute even of hope.

You see my dear sister, I am loth to give up a point I have so much wished to come off conqueror in. But it must be so, and my determination is unalterably fixed, and you must not be surprized to hear a separation has taken place, without a great change should be wrought in a very little time; which I can have no reason to expect.

I seldom hear from Mrs. Stanhope; I fear Lady Smith Daval's words will be found too true, in respect to Mrs. S. though at that time my want of experience made me hard of belief; for I was always willing to persuade myself that Mrs. Stan-

hope was a sincere friend ; and such is my affection for her, that should I find her otherwise, I must always pay that respect to her person which is due, for the attention she paid to me while under her care ; and though it is too much like our sex, to begin a good work and not end it, yet I hope to have it in my power to rank Mrs. S.—with the wonders of the world, by stiling her a friend to her own sex : and may I never be wanting in this particular, is the sincere wish of

Your ever affectionate sister,

S. WRONGHEAD.

L E T T E R LXX.

MRS. G— TO MRS. WRONGHEAD.

Vain is the vow a married woman make,
The husband rules, and she her oath must break.

INDEED I cannot forbear smiling at your seeming determination to leave Mr. Wronghead, and think the beginning of this letter applicable to your present situation ; for believe me Mr. W.—will never suffer you to be from him long ; he will find you if you are upon earth ; he well knows your disposition, is such that he has nothing to do but put on a hypocritical look, and shed a few unmeaning tears, and all your resolution of being parted from him vanishes in a moment. There is

no

no accounting for this strange infatuation in woman, without it is by a kind of witchcraft, that a bad husband has more influence over his wife than a good one, or I think you could never have suffered so much and bear it so tamely. I know you have too much sense to wish me to give my advice upon this subject; nor would it be prudent of me to advise. I only wish to hear you are placed in a situation more agreeable to your amiable disposition; and I think 'tis impossible but the wretched fate which has attended you, for some years, must be nearly at an end; ill fortune will grow tired with her frowns and smile on thee to change the dreary scene. How much I wish for the time to see my dear sister unincumbered from that load of misery, and to hear her say freedom gives life to the gods; without, who would wish to live. Yet we value not that freedom while we have it, or we could never part with it upon such easy terms. But I am ready to believe you know the real worth of liberty by this time from being debarred from it in the highest sense of the word, and may you soon enjoy it is the sincere wish of

Your's affectionately,

S. G.—.

S a

LETTER.

LETTER LXXI.

MRS. WRONGHEAD TO MRS. G.—.

I HAVE just made my escape. No one knows where I am at present, nor do I mean to write to any person but you, for fear of a discovery. I am situated in a pleasant town near ninety miles from the capital; the family are well acquainted with my reason for taking such a step and approve of it. I am certain I am right, because my conscience tells me so, yet believe me my feelings are not to be described on this sudden change; I find myself involved in difficulties unknown before; indeed I have scarcely fortitude enough to support the thoughts of being obliged to lay myself open to the scandal of the world in general, at the same time you well know, my dear sister, that Mr. Wronghead will be the first that will say I am gone off with some gentleman more agreeable to my wishes. You will smile at these scruples in a person who has suffered all the indignities of this sort that could possibly be inflicted unmerited upon the human mind, yet I so much dread the thoughts of scandal, that it brings fresh to my memory the words of the immortal Shakespeare.

Who steals my purse steals trash,
 'Tis something, nothing; 'twas mine, 'tis his,
 And

And has been slave to thousands :
 But he that filches from me my good name
 Robs me of that which not enriches him
 And makes me poor indeed.

In the family I now reside there is a lovely woman from whom I have received great consolation, who has been as unfortunate in the married state as myself, therefore can sympathize with me and admire my resolution of being parted from a man who did every thing in his power to render my life insupportable, though she confesses it was more than she ever had in her power to obtain, till death, best friend to that dear woman, put a period to the life of that object which she had not courage enough to disengage herself from by any other means. I find he was a man of fashion; has been dead near ten months; she has a genteel fortune; and in this blest asylum with such an amiable companion may I spend the remainder part of my life is the sincere wish of

Your affectionate sister,

S. WRONGHEAD.

TO B. ADAMS, ESQ.

Who paid his addresses to Miss Sukey Catlane.

To you my friend may Fortune's favours lead,
 May you be happy, and in love succeed.
 Blest in her smiles she humble by good sense,
 In every friendship happy you commence.
 Let power nor envy e'er disturb thy mind ;
 A noble heart for greatness is design'd !
 Act with strict honor, what fools says despise,
 And every heart like mine shall hail thee wise.
 Ungenerous deeds, look at them with disdain,
 For truth in love doth greatest worth proclaim ;
 Despise suspicion cool without a cause,
 Where virtue, merit don't withhold applause.
 Suffer no morning to upbraid the night,
 But glad the sun in his returning light ;
 Then shall each morn be brightest as 'tis new,
 And every day bring happiness in view.
 In that thou sayst wish not for to deceive,
 For our weak sex who'er we love, believe.
 As real bliss comes from a real flame,
 Let that, dear Adams, be thy highest aim.
 Then take the fair one to thy arms with peace,
 And may thy pleasure with thy love increase.

LETTER

LETTER LXXII.

MRS. G— TO MRS. WRONGHEAD.

YESTERDAY Mr. Wronghead called upon Captain G—. I was not at home. He seemed truly penitent for the ill treatment you had received from him, and confessed he was surprised you did not leave him before; and further added, that your equal for good qualities was not to be found. Yet such was his unhappy disposition, that he was sorry to acknowledge it was out of his power to behave himself decent to any person long together; but flattered himself he had now seen into his error; and if you would be so kind as to return to him again you might depend upon being treated with all the love and respect that was due to your merit. Mr. G— made him but little answer, well knowing that whatever Mr. W— advanced would be but to little purpose, notwithstanding he promised to make such alteration in his conduct that he makes no doubt, but you will have compassion and forgive all that is past. Indeed I hear he looks the picture of despair; and not a word dropped from his mouth that reflected upon your conduct for leaving him, but quoted that divine sentence of Pope's, which tells us, "whatever is, is right." Certainly in Mr. Wronghead is every species of insanity mixed up with rationality: to day he is a rational, to-morrow a mad man; treats those worst he

he loves best, and does every thing in direct opposition to reason and common sense; and though he seems truly sensible of this impropriety in his conduct, yet he acknowledges it is out of his power to help it, though he takes every method for that purpose. For my part I do not understand the meaning of such a strange kind of infatuation, particularly from a man who professes so much religion as Mr. W—; for I can never believe but the man who is once made sensible of his errors may conquer them if he sets about it; or why are we blest with knowing right from wrong. 'Tis impossible for a man to forbear repentance who is really sensible of his sins; and not a man on earth could make me believe he was sorry for his sins who is always sinning. Such are my sentiments in respect to Mr. Wronghead; and as he seems to wish you to be from him till he can be transformed into a rational being, I hope you will have resolution enough to give him time for such a thorough change; for his whole frame must be taken to pieces, the structure new modelled, and not an atom of the old composition left. When this miracle is wrought, then, and not till then, do you, my dear sister, attempt to return.

He begged to be informed how he could get a letter to you. Mr. G— told him by leaving it with him. Therefore you may expect to hear from him soon, as I suppose you would not refuse a favour of that kind, particularly as he bears your departure with decency, and not as you expected, by running to all his friends and asking them if they could inform him who you were gone off with. For though he had no particular reason to suspect any person, yet his unhappy

unhappy disposition led him to fix upon a cause that his own conscience told him he deserved. Yet I do not hear he has been guilty of such base insinuations to any of his acquaintance; at present therefore I could wish you to inform him where you are, as it will add much to your own happiness, as he can have no reason to suspect an impropriety in your conduct. The family you are placed in will convince him of the contrary. I wish much to see you in your retired situation. I think you may almost fancy yourself in heaven, compared with the scene you have experienced for some years past; no loud bawls issued from the mouth of a Bedlamite to disturb your rest in a morning, no continued scene of contradiction closes the day, nor dread confusion waits the returning night. If all matrimony ends like this, who would not shudder at the ill effects. Few people know you have left Mr. W—. Those who do are pleased to say they were surprized you did not leave him before. Yet these very beings may blame you in the next company they meet; therefore if you pay the least attention to the idle talk of that busy part of the world who are too apt to pass judgment upon circumstances which they know nothing about; and I have known many people who have sunk into ruin for want of courage to extricate themselves from it for fear of incurring the blame of some infatuated person who has, told them it was wrong. But I think you have seen too much of the world to adhere to admonitions of this sort; therefore I sincerely wish you every comfort your sham elopement can render you, and must further add, I shall be sorry to hear you return.

From your's,

S. G.—
LETTER

LETTER LXXXIII.

MR. WRONGHEAD TO MRS. WRONGHEAD.

BELIEVE me I am now the unhappiest man on earth; I see my follies in so clear a light that I shudder at them, and like a criminal plead guilty before you; I have nothing but your forgiving heart to rely upon; yet how can I ask forgiveness from one I have so much injured.—Why your own merit encourages me to solicit you by all the ties of a distressed husband, to return once more to him; who without you wishes not to live. Upbraid me not with my ill conduct: I feel the keenest darts for my imprudence that ever man experienced; and if I err again, may you with justness say there is no truth in man. But my dear woman, I have seen my folly, I am convinced of the ill treatment you have unjustly received from me, and as humbly acknowledge it as I do intreat and beg your forgiveness. I shall now devote the remainder part of my life to making the best atonement I am able to Heaven and you, for the crimes I have committed; and hope you will not refuse to look down with an eye of pity upon an object, whose distress of mind would claim your attention, could you behold me in this melancholy situation. My dear, you will be ready to think these are professions and promises which I have often made and as often broke; therefore want some greater proofs of my stability, before you can venture

venture to return : if so, you may command me whatever punishment you are pleased to inflict, and depend I will conform to it, and suffer with pleasure ; even were it to be transported for seven years, had I the least hopes at the end of that time to be blest with your desirable company. Can I say more, or could you wish more from a man, who you may rest assured means to fulfil every engagement he has offered in this letter, and wishes for nothing so much as an opportunity to convince you of the truth of these assertions ; and I hope it will not be long before I have the happiness of seeing you in London :—then may we meet with pleasure, never more to part ; and my earnest prayers are, that you may never repent of such a step ; for indeed I am happy to inform you, I am now looked upon as a rational being, what I have never been thought, for some years past ; and believe me, 'tis no small comfort for a man to find his senses, who has so long been thought to have none.

My dear, I should be glad to know in what part of the earth you have hid yourself ; not that I would wish to surprize you with my presence, as I am well assured, that would not be agreeable without you were convinced of the change there is wrought in me. Since you last saw me, no person knows what I have suffered ; yet it was all for my good ; and I ought not to complain, for all my troubles have only been sufficient to humble me into a proper knowledge of my errors, without which, no man can ever mend, or lead a good life. But I shall not dwell upon this subject, least you may think me too much in the hypocritical system to be much altered for the better.

Since you left me I have done every thing in my power to conduct myself with propriety, and try
to

to walk within the rules of morality as much as any man could possibly do who had been such a stranger to good works for so many years ; and I flatter myself that if you will condescend to return to your poor unhappy husband once more, he will convince you that 'tis not impossible for the worst of men to forsake their evil ways and become good ones. May this be the case of

Your ever affectionate husband,

J. WRONGHEAD.

LETTER LXXIV.

MRS. WRONGHEAD TO MR. WRONGHEAD.

HOW can I account for that which is not to be accounted for ; can a man be mean enough to wish for that which serves to make him wretched ? Is it possible you can regret the loss of her, whom your ill conduct has made miserable, and one who cannot forget the injuries she has received ? therefore must beg to inform you, that nothing but seven years close application to business, with an unblemished character for that time, shall ever alter my opinion concerning any amendment that can be wrought in a disposition so inconsistent with reason as yours ; for if I am of no value only when I am from you, your greatest happiness must be in wishing for me,

as

as such I mean to add that pleasure to you by staying in the country for some time. How a man can be distrest for his wife who does every thing in his power to make her miserable while with him, I do not understand, without his happiness consists in making something wretched, and can find no object so proper for him to tyrannize over as his wife; as these appear to be the sentiments of some men, I could heartily wish those kind of mock savages to be matched with some of those viragos who would pay them in their own kind, and not tamely submit to a yoke of slavery which would make a noble mind shudder. No; I slipped through my yoke, and if I return to it may I ever wear it. There are no words could express my happiness was I assured you had seen into your follies, and that you had resolution enough to live according to the dictates of reason. But alas! what right have I to expect it from the promise of a man who is more fickle than the wind, more deceitful than the serpent that beguiled Eve, and more hypocritical than the heart of a good man could ever conceive; and I wish for nothing so much as to live to see that great change in your heart which you seem so wantingly to put off with your tongue. But believe me I will never be convinced by any thing but your deeds; for your words are but inlets to discover the depravity of your mind till they correspond with truth and goodness. May you never forget there was a time when I might have been made less miserable and you more happy; that time is fled never to return; and the best advice I am able to give you for the present is to endeavour to overcome those violent passions you are so subject to, and remember a few years more will settle every discord

between us, and I hope bring us to a joyful end; and depend, if we meet no more in this world, it is so ordered for the good of both; therefore you will never hear I am destitute of that satisfaction which can only arise from a conscience void of offence; and believe me no power on earth could ever make me repent of a step whereon depends my eternal felicity. For finding myself incapable of bearing any longer the frowns and indignities I had so long laboured under, I thought it very expedient to change the scene, and leave the object who had taken such pains to add these afflictions to my wretched mind. If you are not insensible to every human feeling, if you are not an intire stranger to that noble sentiment, delight in gratitude, you will at the receipt of this epistle, acquiesce in this one, and the last request I ever mean to ask, that is to let me spend my days undisturbed from matrimonial strife, free from the keen insults of low designing minds. Ye Gods! I ask no more; if more ye please to give, tis more than I deserve!

S. WRONGHEAD.

A COPY

A C O P Y o f V E R S E S ,

P R E S E N T E D T O

His Royal Highness Prince WILLIAM HENRY.

WHEN Britons boast their mighty sons of Fame,

Then thou great Prince, shall hear them thus proclaim,

Honor that Prince, who dares the raging seas,

And scorns to live in indolence and ease,

But challeng'd war with all its fierce alarms,

When thundering cannons call him forth to arms,

Then thou great Prince shall raise thy skilful hand,

To strike our foes and save a sinking land,

And when grim Death, with all his darts appear,

We'll boldly meet thee since our Prince is here ;

We'll boldly meet thee, for we'd scorn to fly ;

Henry commands, and we're prepared to die,

Rise, mighty Prince in valour and command ;

Be thou by Sea, what William * was by land,

Then shall our foes be humbled and grow tame,

And haughty Princes tremble at thy name.

• William Duke of Cumberland.

T 2

A Copy.

A C O P Y of V E R S E S,

MADE UPON

THE REVEREND MR. D—.

In Essex, near Colchester.

MAY thy example grace my humble verse
 And teach my pen thy goodness to rehearse,
 But what are words too mean to speak thy praise,
 Or give the lustre, that I wish to raise,
 Yet Reverend Sir, forgive this humble part
 For what I miss in words, I mean in heart,
 Thy noble thoughts inspire thy mind to write,
 And from thy knowledge, spring superior light,
 From every vein, there's some new thoughts arise,
 Deep as the grave, or lofty as the skies,
 For Nature's deep recesses form thy plan,
 And moralize the noblest part of man.
 There wit shines brilliant and thy sense explain,
 That mortal man could not be made in vain,
 But form'd with reason, endued with every sense,
 And made immortal by Omnipotence,

Then

Then why should man be lost in human fate,
Who's reasoning soul declares him to be great,
Enriched with blessings such as crown thy mind,
Flow from thy works, to benefit mankind,
Long mayst thou live thou patron so divine,
And may we copy from thy great design.

T 3 A POETICAL

A

POETICAL ESSAY

UPON

FALSE FRIENDSHIP.

COME Friendship, come ; with all thy arts
appear ;

I'll be thy judge, perhaps you're not sincere.

You may be sent as some deceitful spy,

To offer Friendship, which your heart deny ;

Or some more curious fiend may you employ,

To shew relief which may my peace destroy ;

Various I know are all the shapes you bear,

And false appearance is the mask you wear ;

You are every thing deceit can wish to name,

And in an angel's form the devil came,

His

His voice so pleasing, and his words so mild,
 What man on earth but what had been beguil'd—
 “ My name is pity, and I come to lend
 “ Some small assistance to my worthy friend.
 “ I for thy troubles have been much oppres'd,
 “ And be assured I feel for the distress'd.
 “ I long have wish'd for power to give you aid ;
 “ My pride is justice, then be not afraid.”

It was in Adam's time, as we are told,
 The Devils did a consultation hold
 To ruin man. The grand contest began,
 But how to scheme it was the nicest plan.
 “ Assume false friendship,” Lucifer reply'd,
 “ Attack him so, no fear he'll you deride ;
 “ Soothe him with flattery, let your words be cooth,
 “ Be false in friendship, 'tis a Fiend's eye tooth.’

Up started Satan with a thundering voice,
 Applauds the scheme, and bids his train rejoice.
 Most reverend Fiend to thee we owe the prize,
 To thee shall fall the great, the good, the wise:
 None shall escape, but all shall court thy aid,
 And with false friendship let them all be paid.
 Immortal be thy fame, and all thy race,
 And in our regions take the highest place.

More

More merit due for this aspiring thought
 Than mortals knew, or hellish Fiends e'er wrought.
 'Tis *summum bonum* to our direful train,
 And shall to man procure the greatest pain.
 Then shall we triumph when a man's distress'd,
 And curse him most when most he thinks he's blest.
 For misery will for comfort often seek,
 And in their anguish will the mind oft speak.
 Take that advantage, mark his deeds as well,
 Then scourge his folly, 'tis the gift of hell.
 To wound a perfect soul be all things try'd,
 For dire deceit is Satan's God of pride.
 So shall our kingdom at the height ascend,
 And man shall tremble at the name of friend.
 The inspired Fiends such glory did resound,
 The infernal regions echo'd with the sound ;
 Satan's chief glory when a man appear
 To be a friend yet turn out inf sincere.
 'Tis most like us who played our part so well,
 That God in justice struck us down to hell ;
 Yet we have power, and will exert our right
 To punish man ; I hate the creature's sight.
 Yet I'll accost him in that tender form
 That charms the heart and must his senses warm ;

I'll

I'll speak such words he never heard before,
 And offer kindness—can the Gods do more?
 I'll teach him pleasures that his soul ne'er knew,
 But mark the end, revenge is in my view.
 I have tortures, racks, and all so well design'd
 Shall touch him no where but his wretched mind,
 Then shall he feel the wound that I have made,
 His conscience marred, his guilty soul betray'd.
 Then will he curse us when it is too late,
 Upbraid his stars and quarrel with his fate.
 What pleasure will it give for us to see
 Those perfect beings fall as well as we.
 He was beneath us why not keep him so;
 If not we'll blast him while he is below;
 Send out the crew, put on the shape of man,
 Deceive, dissemble, that must be your plan.
 Show him but riches, that will best succeed,
 Then take the coward he will gently lead;
 Quick to his ruin, he is mostly bent,
 Therefore wants not much courting to consent.
 Be ready all, hold out the gilded bait,
 And let the devils all in secret wait,
 To watch their movements and conduct their will,
 Show them that good from which proceeds all ill.

Show

Show them the side which looks so wondrous fair,
 But hide the evil with the greatest care ;
 For man is suspicious of our aim,
 And fain would rob us of our dearest claim ;
 For those on earth, more base than we are here,
 They rob and plunder what they hold most dear.
 And so deceitful is that thing called (man,)
 They glory to deceive us if they can.
 False Friendship on the tongue too often dwell,
 Most happy he whose carriage fit it well.
 Therefore the mild and gentle bear the sway,
 And Satan's tool at Mile End must obey ;
 No son of Satan's can be more compleat,
 In all delusive arts I own him great ;
 Yet offer kindness with so good a grace,
 To doubt his word, the very thought seem'd base.
 What mean mistrust to guard against a friend ;
 Yet mark the truth 'twill answer every end.
 So may you stand the test of all his art,
 And shun the flattery of an evil heart.
 Beware those smiles which most delude the mind,
 False are the hearts of those who speak most kind.
 They seek their prey like some sharp-sighted Fiend,
 And with persuasive words deceive their friend.

Then

Then with triumphant voice their art proclaim,
A mighty deed my glory and my aim,
At this all nature fetched a horrid groan,
And own'd its ruin to itself alone.

This was a devil's very artful plot,
Satan was right, but foolish man is not.
Up started Wisdom who with grief reply'd,
Shake off deceit; be happy Reason cried,
Learn truth and justice, let it be your care,
Why would you wish for Satan's mark to wear.
Deceit in Friendship is the mark of hell,
And that's his kingdom, where false Friendship dwell.

F I N I S.